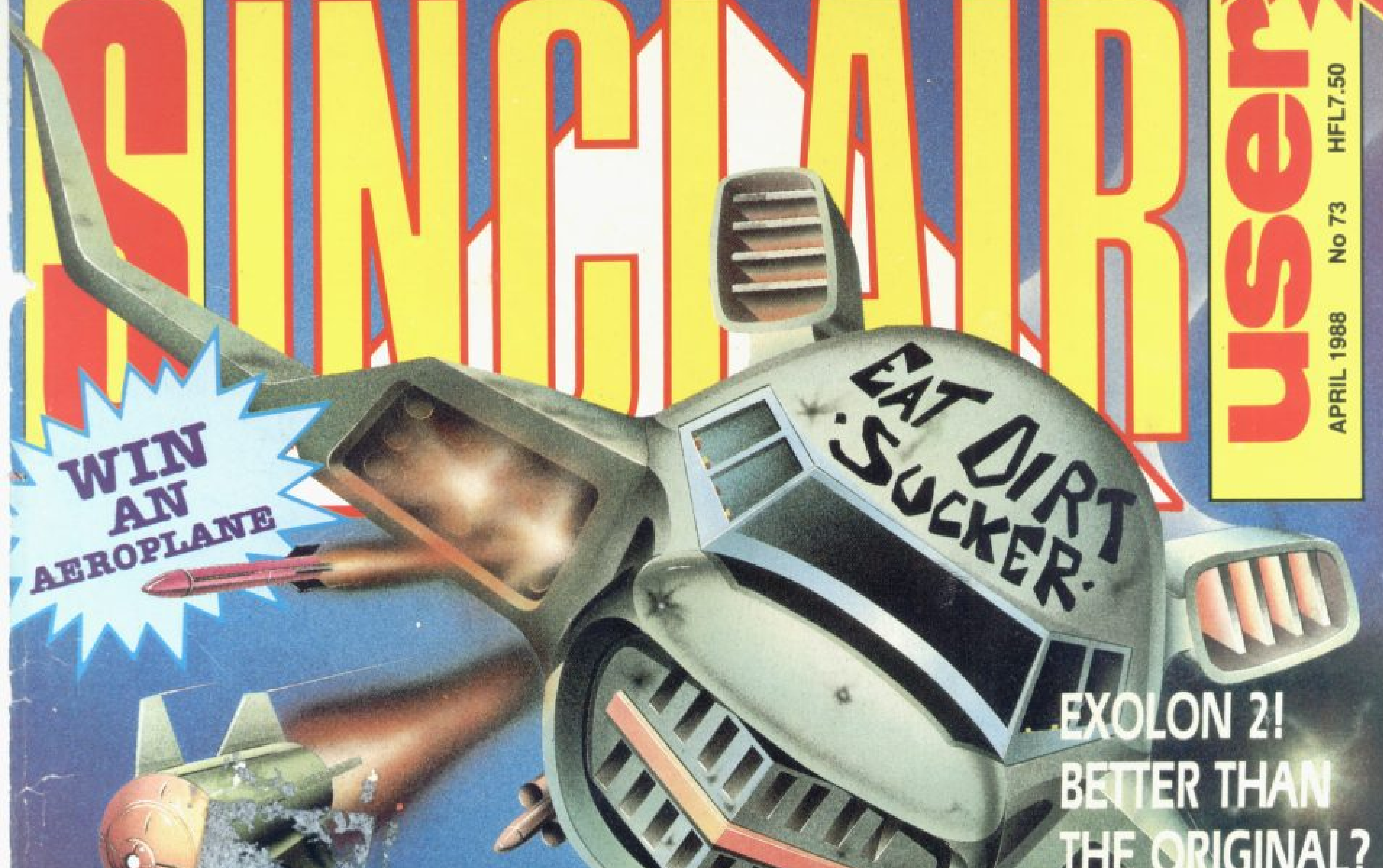
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No 73 APRIL 1988 HFL7.50

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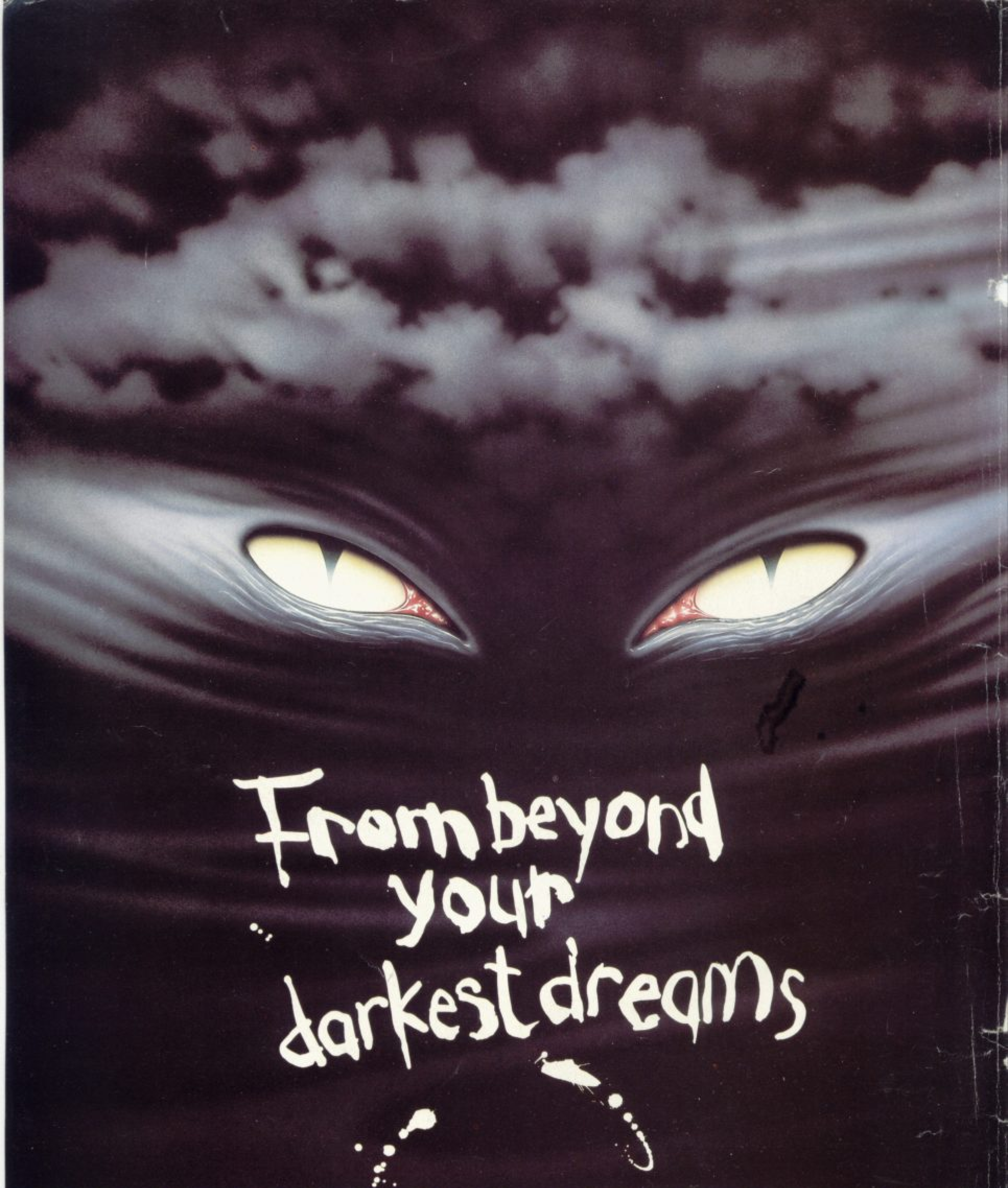
If you can read this
A. your tape has been nicked
B. you're having a good time (oo-er)

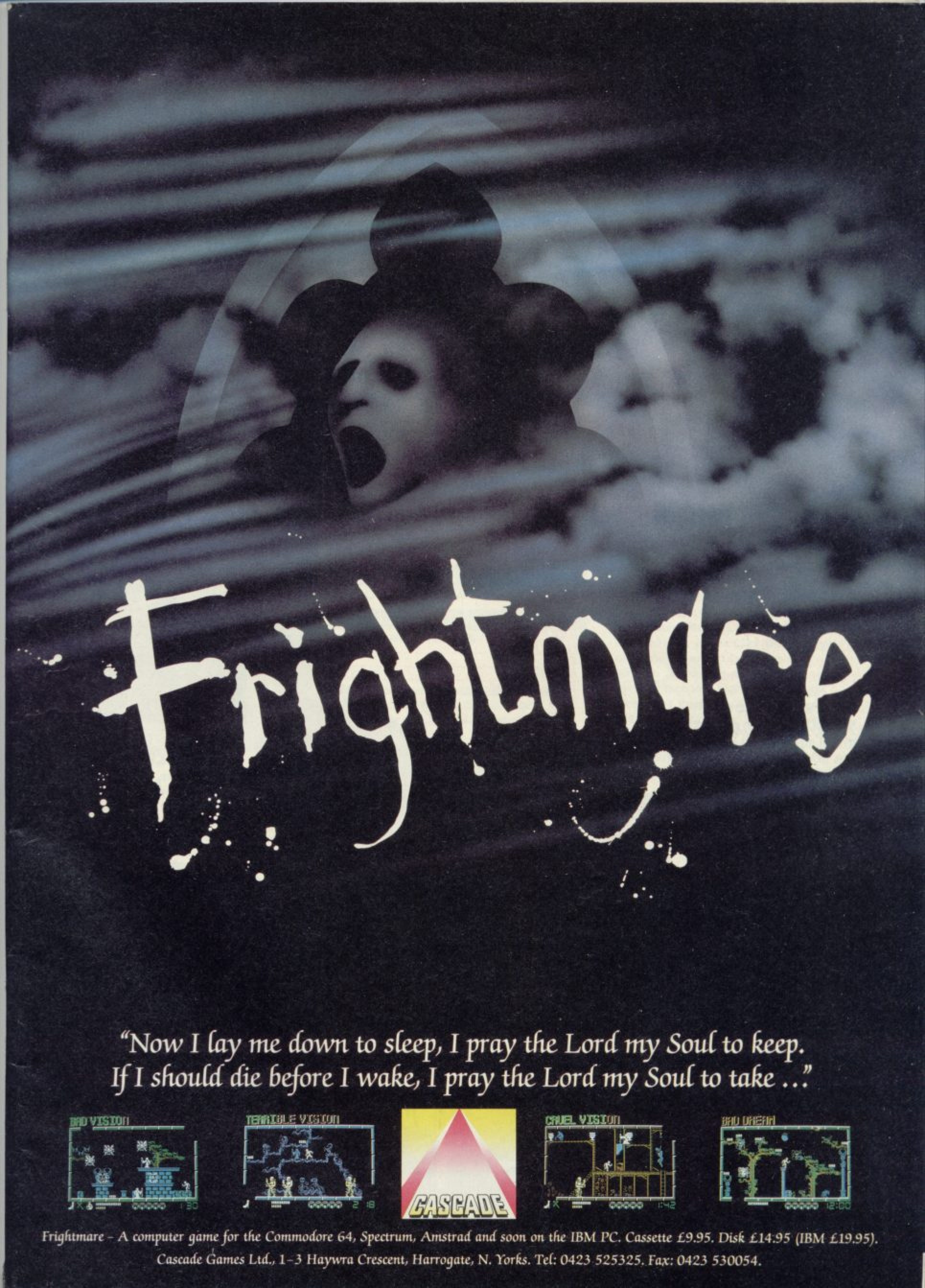
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SIDE B: BARD'S TALE : EXCLUSIVE!
PLAY THE ENTIRE FIRST LEVEL

SEE PAGE 8

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NORTHSTAR ★ ARKANOID II ★ YETI ★ XARAX
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SOFTWARE

ARCADE

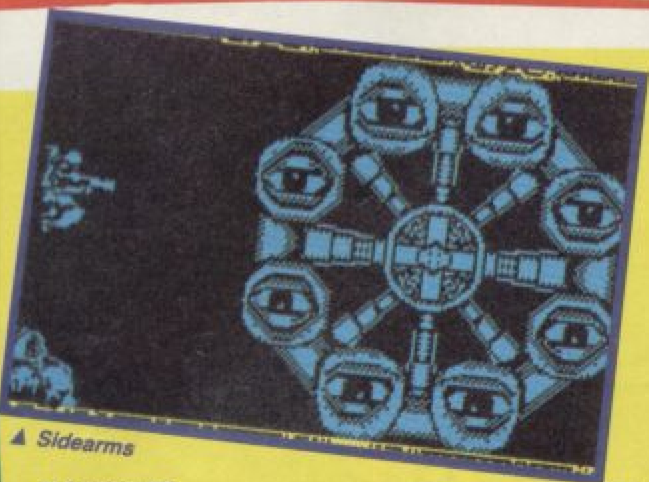






TENTS





▲ Sidearms

▼ Frightmare



COVER GAME 42

Cybernoid is this month's cover and if the name doesn't ring a bell, the pedigree should. It's the follow up to **Exolon** and it's fantastic. Check it out now

TRUE STORIES 46

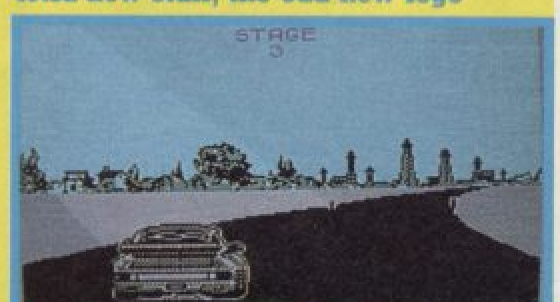
A new look to News. We bring you the excitingly different, irritatingly round the wrong way, a bit like a newspaper in a way, totally unique, sure to be copied HOT POOP on who is doing what with what to whom when how and using rubber devices

3 Classic Games 92

No, no, no, not all adventury type things are boring. Some are brilliant. In particular the trilogy of games created by Gargoyle Games, featuring animated mythic heroes, fights and magic were just fantastic and Classics of their time. They've just been re-released at a paltry £1.99 and we think you'll luv 'em

Preview 100

We've got even more pages of 'em! More info, more pictures, more generally wonderful hot stuff than any other magazine. Including lotsa new stuff, the odd new logo

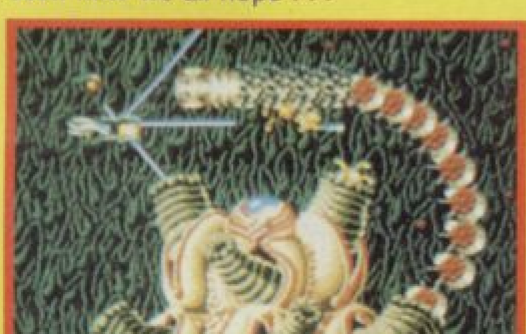


▲ Crazy Cars

and lotsa new games including: Crazy Cars, Flintstones, Bard's Tale, Action Force II, Soldier of Light and Renegade II

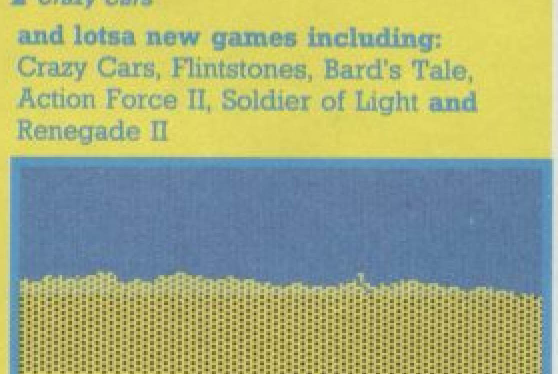
Coin-ops 82

This has got to be the newest, brightest feature in town! Find out what you should be spending your 20p on, what everybody else is spending their 20p on, what will be converted on to the Spectrum in all its multicoloured multi-action glory real soon now we all hope . . .



MOVIE MADNESS! 56

Exclusive! (Nobody else could care less)! The games based on the film licences they dare not tell you about. SEE the horrible screen shots! READ the horrible text! GASP! SHOCK! BARF!



▲ Flintstone

Smash Coupons 30

Four great big, juicy, succulent, steaming, throbbing (Em, are you sure about this? – GT) well OK possibly not actually throbbing then, but certainly mega value for money discounts on MAJOR games

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MORE ACTION AND EXCITEMENT
THAN HUMANLY POSSIBLE!

Personally we reckon this month's tape is even better than last month's. MORE POKES. MULTI-LEVEL GAME. ENTIRE FIRST LEVEL OF BARD'S TALE. Here are the vital details to get the most from it.

MEGA TAPE 2

GO BEAR GO

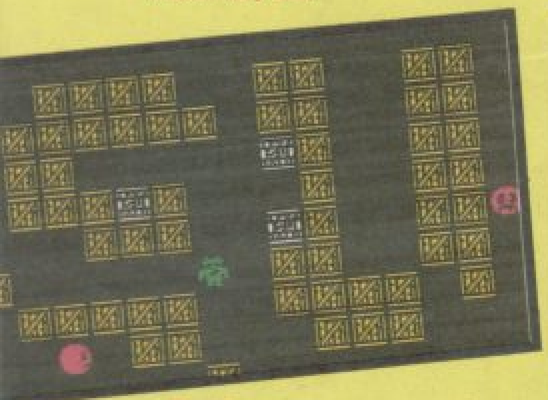
This month's game. It involves an unbelievably bizarre plot which has Kamikaze Bear in charge of a warehouse. In this warehouse are three packing cases containing copies of the latest SU. It seems these packing cases have got a bit mixed up and Kamikaze has to get them all together and put them all in a nice neat row either up or down.

The problem is, also lurking in the warehouse are a bunch of no-hoper blobby things known affectionately as THE DOPES. The DOPES, being DOPES have to be dispatched. Kamikaze can do this in a number of brutal ways:

1 By pushing a packing case at them;

2 By running up to the perimeter fence when they are near it and electrocuting them (and then running over them when they are stunned);

3 By nutting the 'breeder crates' where new DOPES are hiding. These flash whenever you kill a DOPE – you have to remember where they are.



Kamikaze can remove crates that are in the way by crumbling them away. DOPES also crumble crates – usually just as you're about to push them at them. There is a time limit to getting the SU crates in a line and totalling all the DOPES, and as you go up the levels it gets more and more difficult, since the packing cases are more and more widely dispersed. There are some nasty additional surprises on later levels too.

SCREEN EDITOR

As a special bonus we've included a screen editor which will let you design your own screens. Select this from the opening menu and you'll get the screen with a flashing cursor. To change the block under the cursor use the following keys:

0,B or SPACE	**Change to blank**
1 or C	**Change to crate**
2 or D	**Change to SU crate***
3 or E	**Change to egg crate**

*** You can only put in 3 SU crates**

GO BEAR GO

Controls

Kempston or Keyboard using

O	Left
P	Right
Q	Up
A	Down
SPACE	Push/Crumble Block
BREAK	Return to Basic

*** Anyone pointing out that this game is a bit like** Pengo **will not be telling us anything we didn't already know . . .**

PROGRAMMERS

Go Bear Go is brought to you by ODE, the programming team responsible for, among other things, **Trivial Pursuit** and other equally nifty stuff.

- Richard Horrocks did the programming and some graphics
- Jason Kingsley did some other graphics
- Richard Yapp did the fab loading screen which was digitised using an Amiga
- John Wood did major playtesting and
- Steven Green was encouraging (?).

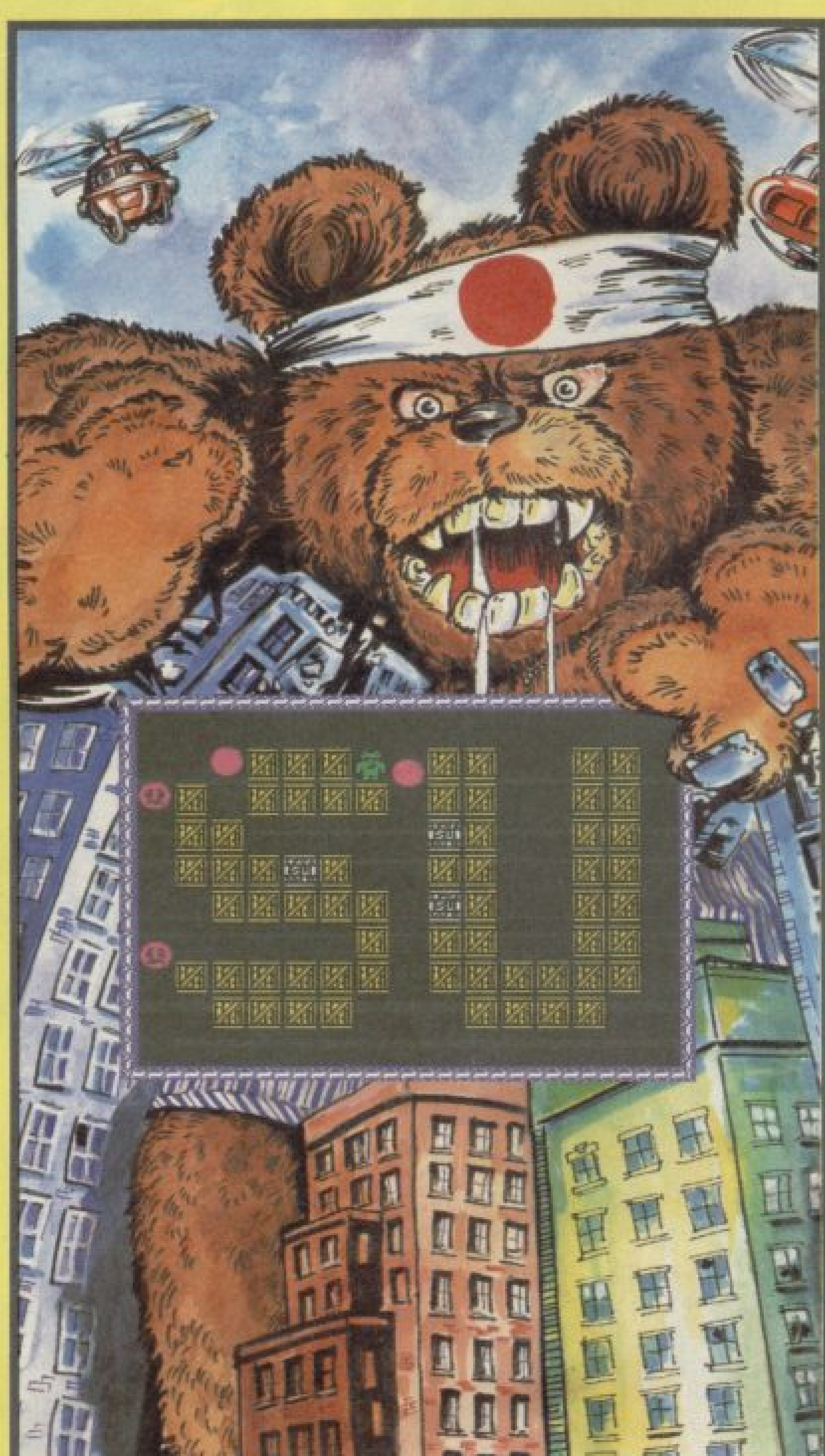
POKES ON TAPE

You told us you loved them. We felt so chuffed we decided to give you even more than last time. At last an idiot-proof way of getting those infinite lives! Just load up the Pokes Section at the end of the first side, select the game you want infinite lives on, and load up your copy!

This month:

PLATOON, PREDATOR, IK+, INSIDE OUTING, KIKSTART II, ROADWARS, RED OCTOBER, DEVIANTS

IMPORTANT POINT – If you have a 128K machine or a +3 be sure to load the Pokes tape in 48K mode, ie, Select 48K Basic then type *LOAD ""*



PLAYABLE DEMO – BARD'S TALE

When we say playable, we mean it. We present the entire first level of the game! Potentially several hours worth of play! It's a role playing fantasy adventure with fighting and trading and stuff and lotsa graphics! We're not going to say too much about where to look and what to do with what you might find, but here are the instructions you'll need: First of all create your character – just follow the prompts.



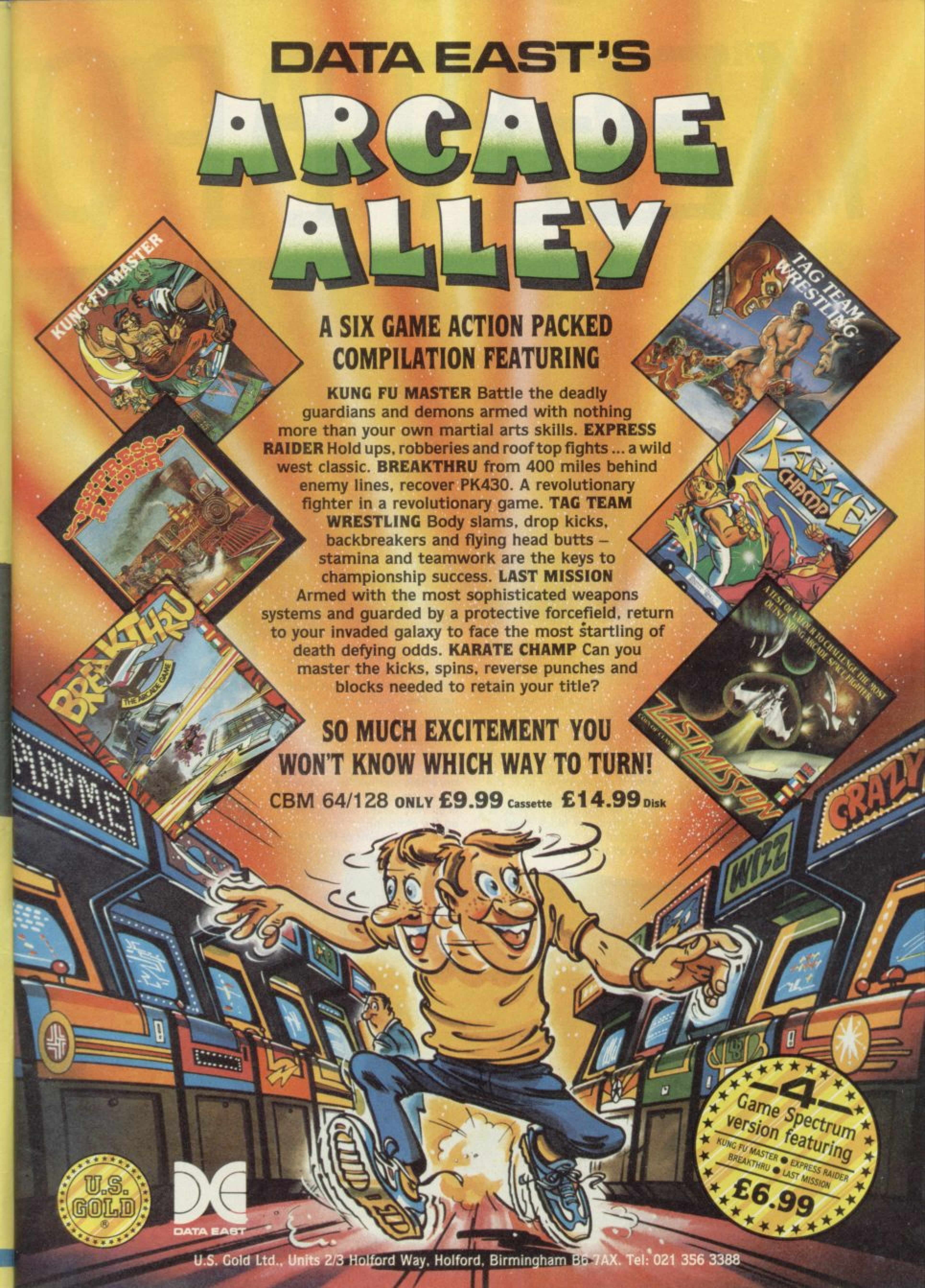
Moving About:
J = Face left
K = Move forward
L = Face right

Viewing Characters:
1-6 = Choose character
T = Trade items or gold
D = Drop items
E = Equip items or unequip the lot
P = Pool gold

Combat Commands:
F = Fight
R = Run
P = Party attack (attack each other)
A = Attack monsters
D = Defend against attack
U = Use item
C = Cast spell
H = Hide in shadows

General:
C = Cast a spell, followed by who is casting and what spell
P = Party attack
B = Bard's song
M = Change marching order

Spells:
Conjurers: MAFL ARFI SOSH TRZP
Magicians: VOPL AIAR STLI SCSI



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KUNG FU MASTER
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MEGA APO

You can give games a flashy title, you can give them wild and exciting plots, you can even cover them with expensive packaging or jam, but you can't hide the fact that a shoot-'em-up is a shoot-'em-up, no matter what it's dressed up as. So why bother dressing it up at all?

I mean, there is nothing more annoying than going down to my local software dealer to buy the latest game, Slaughter of the Weeble Wobbles at some exorbitant price, only to get it home and find that all the claims of it being the most wonderful great, terrific game etc. are not true and it's simply a poor **Defender** clone after all.

I have to say now, I love **Mega Apocalypse** to bits because it tells you exactly what it is. It doesn't promise you the chance to rule the galaxy. It doesn't tell you about the millions of different sprites and screens in the game. It tells you that it's a shoot-'em-up and a good one at that.

Mega Apocalypse is similar in many ways to Martech's earlier offering, **Crazy Comets**, in that it has the same game objective. You still have to fly around space shooting anything that comes near and generally clocking up some very high scores. The game is set over a multitude of levels and as you can tell from the screenshots on this page, all are completely different (oooh, little bit of sarcasm there). OK, so originality of gameplay is not one of the strongest points in the game, but who needs originality for a game this good?

You fly a little diamond-shaped craft (which, incidentally, looks like a reject from Elite, but enough of this nitpicking). You fly it around a single screen for each level, but when it comes down to it, the playing area is quite large. The only area you can't move to is a line 1 character block deep at the top of the screen, which holds all the information about lives, score, etc. The original Commodore version of **Mega Apocalypse** had excellent moving backdrops, and these have been transferred very impressively to the Spectrum. The starfield background is completely animated, with the stars spreading outwards (as in a lot of 3-D space games). Then the whole starfield spins around the centre of the screen, which is all very clever, but very hard on the old brain.



The movement of the planets is fab. They start as little blobs and then grow into huge planets which bounce around the screen, usually after some



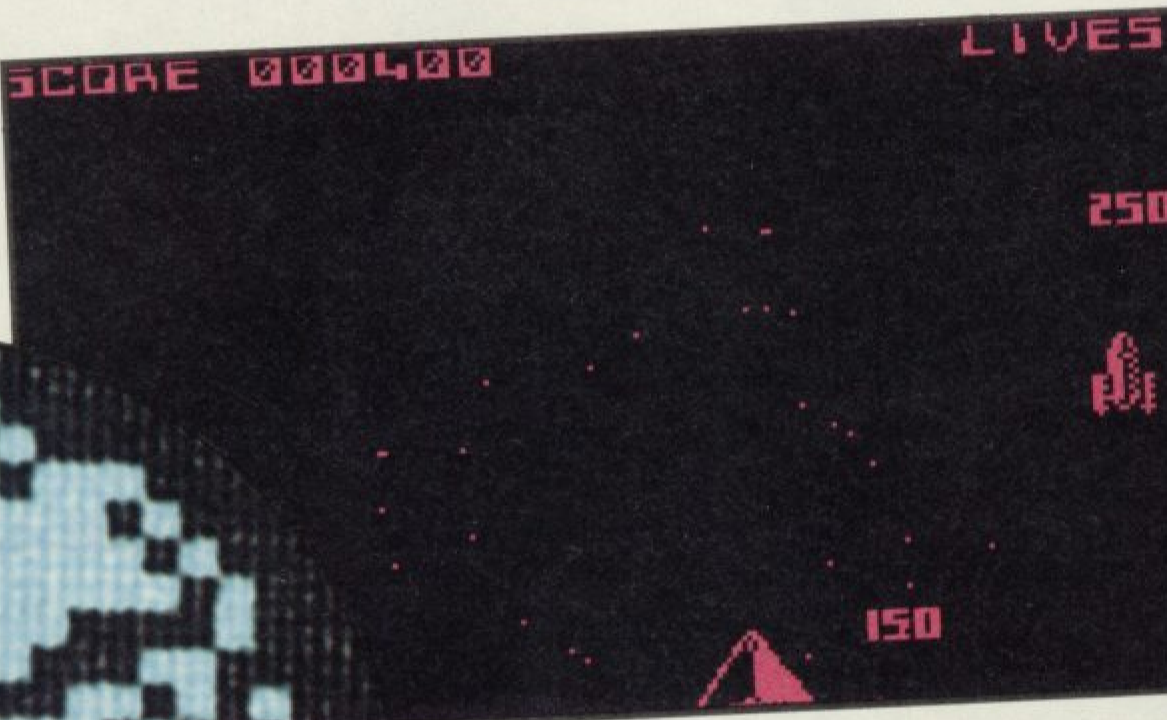
FAXBOX

Terrific blasty sort of game with lots of needless violence and mass destruction. One for the year, perhaps

MEGA APOCALYPSE
Label: Martech
Author: John Wilson
Price: £8.999 tape, £14.99 +3 disc
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various
Reviewer: Tony Dillon
★★★★☆ 8

CALYPSE

ARCADE ★ REVIEW





contact with you. By the way, contact with most objects in the game causes death, so be careful.

One major complaint about **Comets** was that it was too hard in the way that you could only fire upward. However, Martech has listened very closely to the grapevine and come up with a rotate facility, which allows you to manoeuvre your ship in any of the 8 directions available, which is bloody handy. Nice one Martech.

Upon loading, you are greeted with a small piece of speech which tells you to, "Get Ready," in a very indistinct American accent. At least I think this is what it says; it took me a long time to realise that it was speech and not a digitised sound effect of a heavy smoker blowing his nose (not very pretty).

But the music, the music! This is something else. David Whittaker has created a zappy new tune with a hint of **Crazy Comets** behind it. It's wicked.

Generally then, a wonderful game. I think everyone will like this one, basically because it's an addictive blast and one for which you don't need much brain power■



SOFTWARE STAR RATINGS

*	Avoid this game under all circumstances
**	Poor and/or massively overpriced
***	Dull and uninteresting, if not actually awful
****	Fairly average. Nothing to get excited abou
*****	OK but nothing special
******	Not bad, some good points. See before you buy
*******	Pretty good. We were quite impressed. Worth a look
********	Good stuff. Well worth the money
*********	Very good indeed. A must buy
**********	Brilliant. Must buy at all costs
Classic	The best program of its type we've seen to date

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FROM THE EDGE OF



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SIGNED

ZAPCH…

1

Jon Riglar. (Adopts deeply important and not very mirthful voice). Surely the oddest man to ever appear in the divine shade of Autumnal elegance that is the wondrous world of computer journalism. Was it not our own hard rocking spanker Jon who was recently described by a national fashion magazine by saying 'integrity is etched into his solid granite forehead and his dark cavernous dimple is a metaphor for his immense but somehow intangible charisma'? Was it not our very own Graham Taylor who described the smoulderin' dude by stating 'he may have a face like a tram crash, but he's a wow with the kids . . . and the kids know where it's at'? It was indeed, and now that all the mystic runes are aligned to put right the wrongs of ages past, Jon Riglar will flick through his filofax and spread the word concerning forthcoming delights in this month's Zapchat. (flick, flick, leaf, leaf) "It's far too peculiar to get anywhere." The legend has spoken! (muffled blowy noises)

STANDBY TO ACCESS: GARFIELD . . . The Edge
SECTION WRITERS: Jon Riglar and Andrew Males

'A hoorgle' as Garfield would no doubt exclaim if he had the opportunity. *Garfield* the game is perhaps the best cartoonishy game to appear in the whole wide world (which is actually pretty wide, if you don't believe me try walking it mate!) and Andrew Males was the very very very first person to complete the game. On 6th January 1988 if you must know. And you too can rescue Arlene if you cast your peepers over the easy-to-follow-with-lots-of-bendy-bits:



FAT TIP 1

Run through the house until you reach the room with the television set. Here you should carry on walking to the right until Garfield arrives at a black door. This is the garden shed and inside is a spade which needs to be collected. Make sure you don't run up an appetite, otherwise Gar will grab hold of the spade and noonch it which means it's pointless carrying on. Instead, just before you enter the TV room, grab hold of the balls (fnirk, fnirk). These are useless items. Then trot to grab the spade, but before you do, eat the balls to drop the appetite meter back to zero.

FAT TIP 2

You now have the spade. Run back to the house, past the TV set and then to the left so you arrive beside a bouncing bone – this looks like a dead end)well, the room does, not the bone). Here get Garf to drop the spade and pick up the bone. Then drop the bone when Odie appears and a totally hidden door should become totally unhidden ie it appears. Then run and grab the spade before Odie runs away with it. If he manages to grab it before Garfield, then chase and kick the dog.

FAT TIP 3

Continue on the leftward tact until you arrive at the hardware store. Enter the shop and once you get inside, press down and fire keys simultaneously and a wad of money should float down from the ceiling. Take this and go left once again onto the health store.

FAT TIP 4

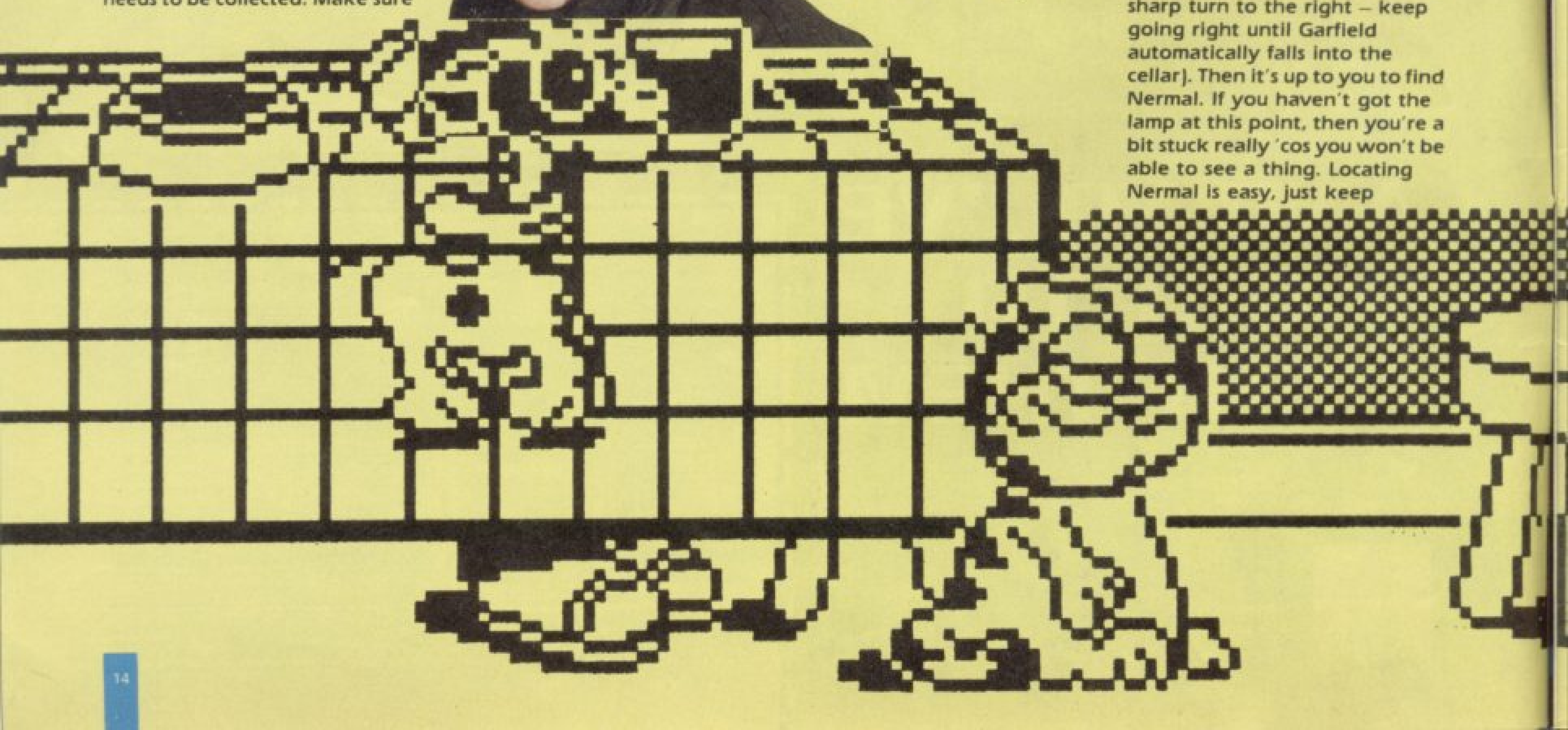
And in we go. Into the health store that is. Once inside, drop the money and a cake should appear. Take this and walk onwards to the park – you'll locate the park by looking for the man that appears to be sat in a hedge. Hmm. If you find this screen, then walk back out and drop the cake.

FAT TIP 5

Run back to the house and take the lamp that is sitting on top of the telly – you'll need to firstly jump onto the nearby chair and then leap over and onto the telly. Watch your hunger meter – if you let it reach its limit then you'll end up eating the lamp.

FAT TIP 6

Take the lamp to the cellar. (From the telly, left and then a sharp turn to the right – keep going right until Garfield automatically falls into the cellar). Then it's up to you to find Nermal. If you haven't got the lamp at this point, then you're a bit stuck really 'cos you won't be able to see a thing. Locating Nermal is easy, just keep



JON RIGLAR THE MAN AND HIS MUSIC

STANDBY TO ACCESS: PLATOON . . . Ocean
SECTION WRITER: Jon 'All my parcels get squashed' Riglar

walking to the right. Then Kick him until he drops a clockwork mouse. Everytime Nermal is booted, he runs out of the screen at high speed, so you'll need to time the kicks to perfection. (I was gong to tell a joke, but I won't bother now.) Also, when Nermal finally drops the mouse, it too will scurry about and be a bit of a pain. Make sure Garfield grabs it before Odie picks it up. And make sure you don't eat it!

FAT TIP 7

Drop the lamp BEFORE picking up the mouse and then go back to the Health Store. Once inside drop the mouse and something humungous should fall down. It looks a bit like a doughnut but then, who really cares?? Yes, who does? You do eh? Go away.

FAT TIP 8

Now you have the absolutely swingorilliant mystery object, walk right back to the cellar and stop off at the first screen. Here a rat will start to dash about a bit and look, well, a bit ratty actually. Drop the object x near the rat, and it will thus disappear and the rat will sit in the corner looking rather podgy. Now move over to the chest and kick it a couple of times. Two objects should now appear on the floor – a bone and a key.

Pick up the bone first and eat it. And then grab the key and climb back up and into the house.

FAT TIP 9

Run back to the park and drop the key inside. Now dash back outside and pick up the cake you left there earlier. (You did didn't you? Gawd, I don't know, I did tell you. I did. I did. I'm sorry, but that's the way I am.) Take the cake inside the park and drop. A bird should no appear from the right hand side and start flapping over to the left. Grab the key and then jump up and onto the bird. Thus! You will be 'transported' to a completely new screen with a black door in the background. Enter the building and walk to the right and you will find Arlene and will have completed the game!

FATISH TIP 10

Well, sorry about this, but there isn't actualy a number ten. Ten would have been such a nice number to finish off on, but when the world is devoid of truth who can tell which way the fish jumped?

2



READER'S BIG FIVE CHART
SECTION WRITER: Jon 'Jon' Riglar

How splendid it would be, would it not (be splendid that is) to write into this wondrous organ and have your chart printed. Friends, this dream is reality! (Pay attention at the back!) Send all offerings to Who-The-Heck-Is-Bertrum-Windybottom-Anyway?-(Jon Riglar) and include your top five along with the most terribly awfully cr*p game that you wouldn't swop for a green ooflaaflaa no matter what your mother said. Paul Jenkins has contributed this month's witteringly pleasant chart. And here it is fellow:

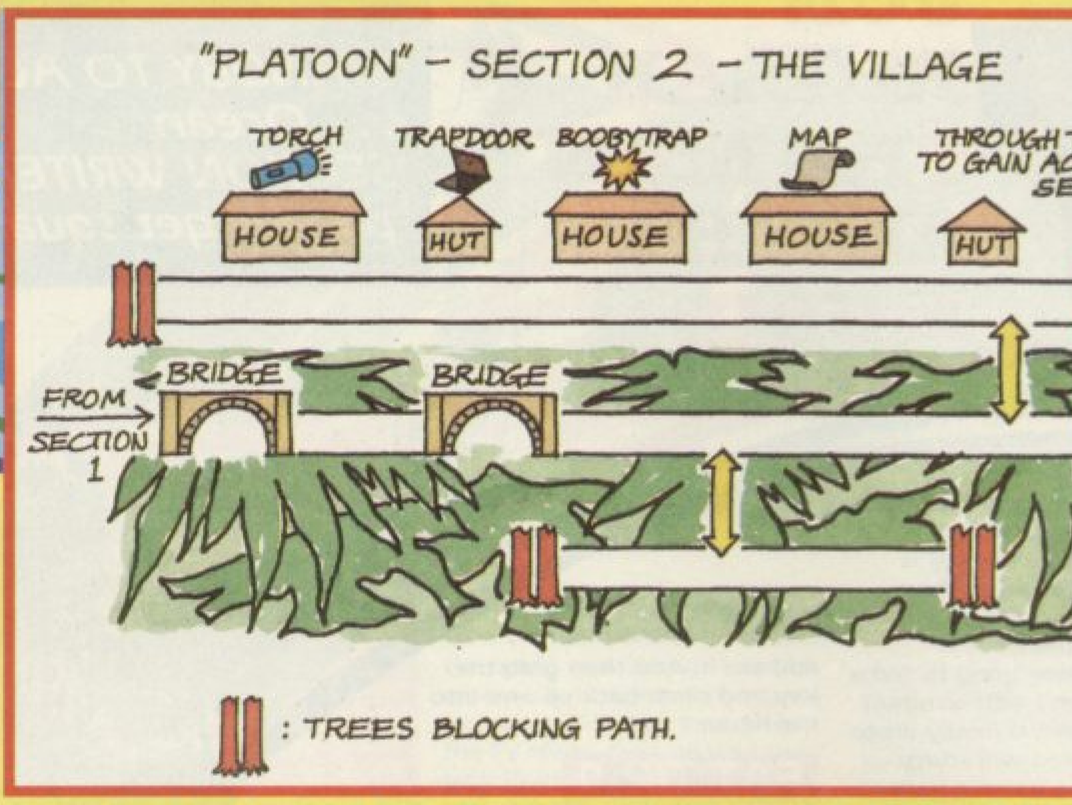
1 SUPER HANG-ON	ELECTRIC DREAMS
2 XECUTOR	A.C.E.
3 EXOLON	HEWSON
4 COMBAT SCHOOL	OCEAN
5 WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD	US GOLD

The worst game this century is *Centurions* by Starlight. Words can't describe how bad Paul thinks it is, so he won't bother trying. Wow! Won't a laid-back fella (man) I don't care what you say Madam, I've already had my R.F. probe serviced this month! (man)

Flick, flick, leaf, leaf Wake up people! *Platoon* is a game with moral! Having said that, this harbinger of delight still involves running round and duffing up people who strangely seem to play the saxaphone when shot. It's an odd world isn't it viewers? But who cares? It comes complete with a 'deeply flash' box and an absolutely tiresome eurohit by Smokey Robinson. (Bertrum Windybottom writes: The song isn't actually a eurohit at all, but the phrase just looked good, so we used it – okay?)

Platoon is a game with lotsa sections. Section 1 involves our 'innocent' soldier tramping around in the jungle avoiding the saxaphone playing enemy troops. The first thing you should do, is locate the explosives. To gain access to the folowing sector, you have to run across and bridge and blow it up once at the other end – this prevents enemy troops romping across and kicking you to bits. The explosives are placed in the bottom right hand corner of the map and can take some time to get to – along the way, jump around a bit to avoid standing on top of the enemy. Grab the explosive and run back the way you originally came. The next thing to do, is locate the bridge. This is over to your right, but to get there, you need to tramp down to the bottom of the map, then to the left, then right up to the top, a dash along to the right and finally a sprint down. There are lots of dead ends in jungle, so make sure you don't lose your way using the map.

ZAPCHAT 3



The enemy attack in various ways – you'll come across the usual 'I'm gonna run straight at you' men who can be dealt with by a short blast with the gun. Try to keep still when attacking the enemy – if you run at them and shoot simultaneously, you'll end up getting knocked over. Ha. The other type that may be encountered drop from the nearest tree – and usually land on your head or just behind you. Keep running and once they appear, turn swiftly and blast. Kneel down to avoid enemy fire. To avoid being shot by the critters that pop up from the ground, keep jumping about.

There is no pause mode!! No pause mode!! Although this is undoubtedly very odd indeed, it's also a pain in the neck when you try to turn over your Phillip Glass cassette and spot the troops at the same time. So! The only way to avoid being shot in this case is to press the select button. However, if you like a bit of a challenge then walk to a junction and keep moving the man up and down.

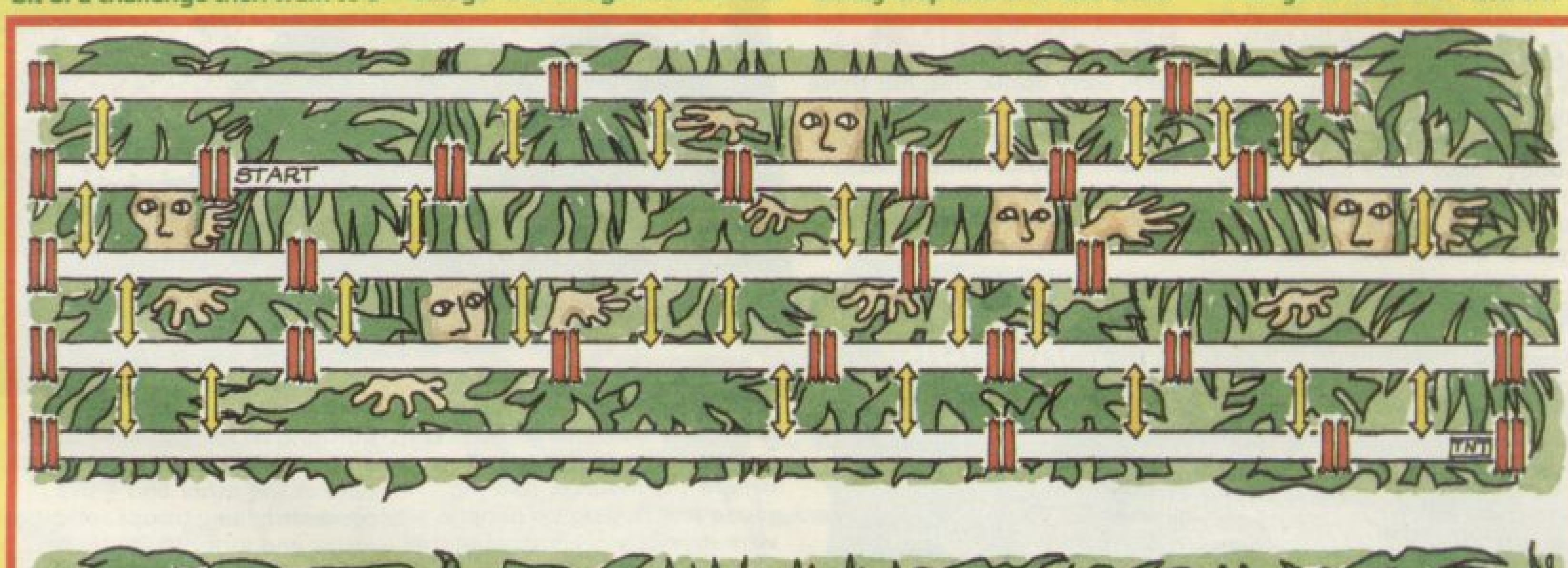
PLATOON SECTION 2 – THE VILLAGE

When you arrive at the end of section one and start to cross the bridge, you'll notice that control of your man goes into the hands of the computer. This is OK, but enemy troops still tend to appear and blow you away unless you keep firing. Once past the bridge, there's no turning back and you'll find yourself on the way to the village. The village itself consists of one long road, with several huts. In most of the huts, there are just sacks of rubbish but in about the third you'll find the map. Then you should come across the trapdoor and you will be asked whether you wish to enter it – don't. You also need to find the torch before going on to the next level.

The torch can be found in the last hut in the village. When you enter this hut you will be attacked automatically by a block sat in the corner. Also take care to avoid searching too many sacks – a lot contain nothing but rubbish, however, in one or two you'll find a booby-trap and will lose a life.

Also avoid attacking innocent villagers – these can be found trotting around the village wearing woks on their heads. If you find yourself shooting anything that enters the screen, then your morale will zoom down and the game will end. Instead avoid shooting anything at all. If an enemy enters the screen jump over him instead of blasting away.

Once you have gained the torch and the map run back to the hut containing the trapdoor. Before you press the 'Y' key and enter the tunnel press the selection key and make sure you have your fittest man on the job. Then go on into the network.



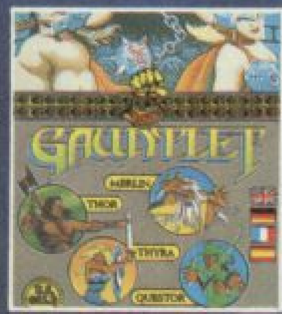
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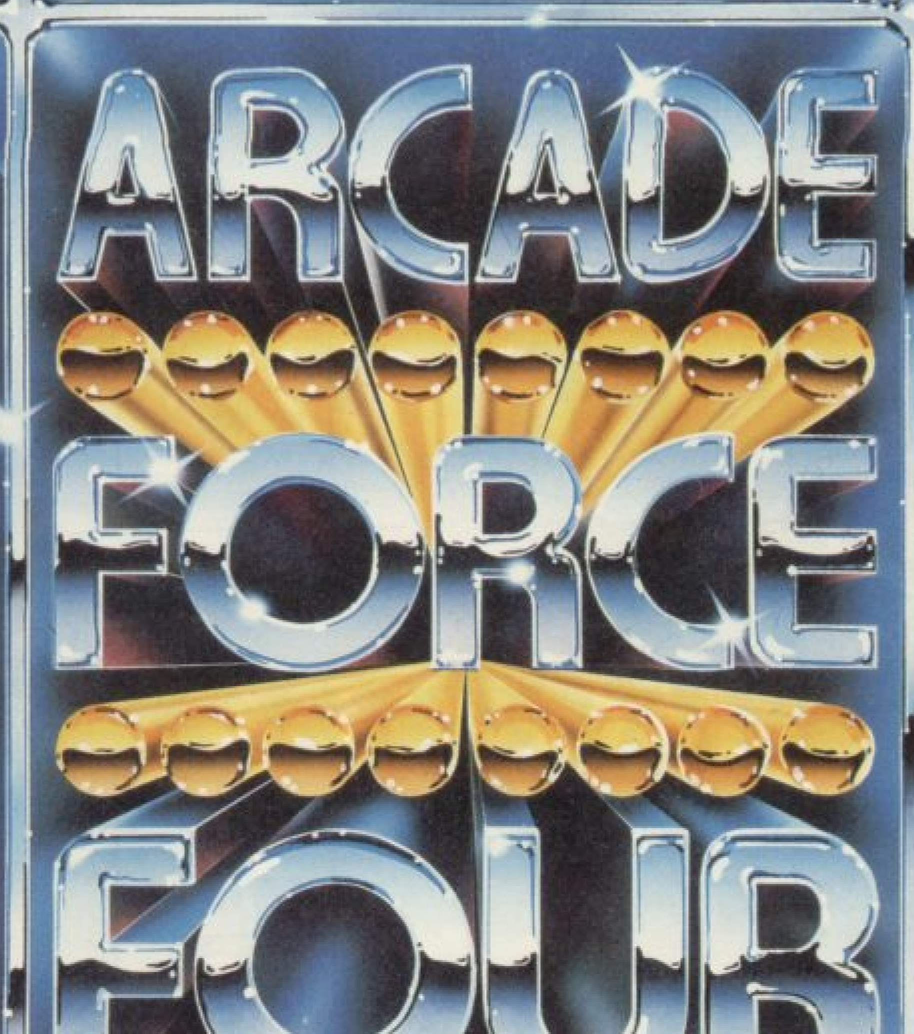
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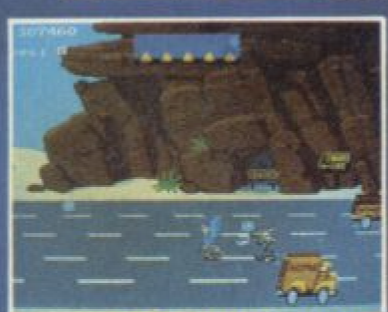






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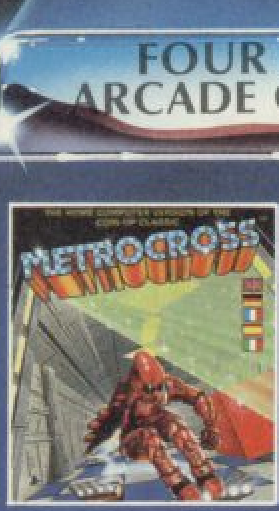
ATARI GAMES

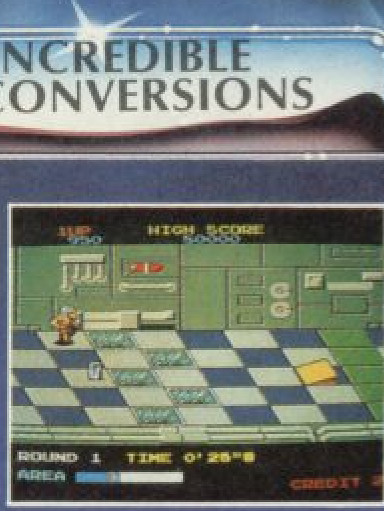




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LEVEL 2

16 You're in the Realm of the Robots. Keep moving until you approach a gap and make a running jump to hop across to the next block. You'll need to jump once again before Blob, or whatever he's called, reaches the first lift.

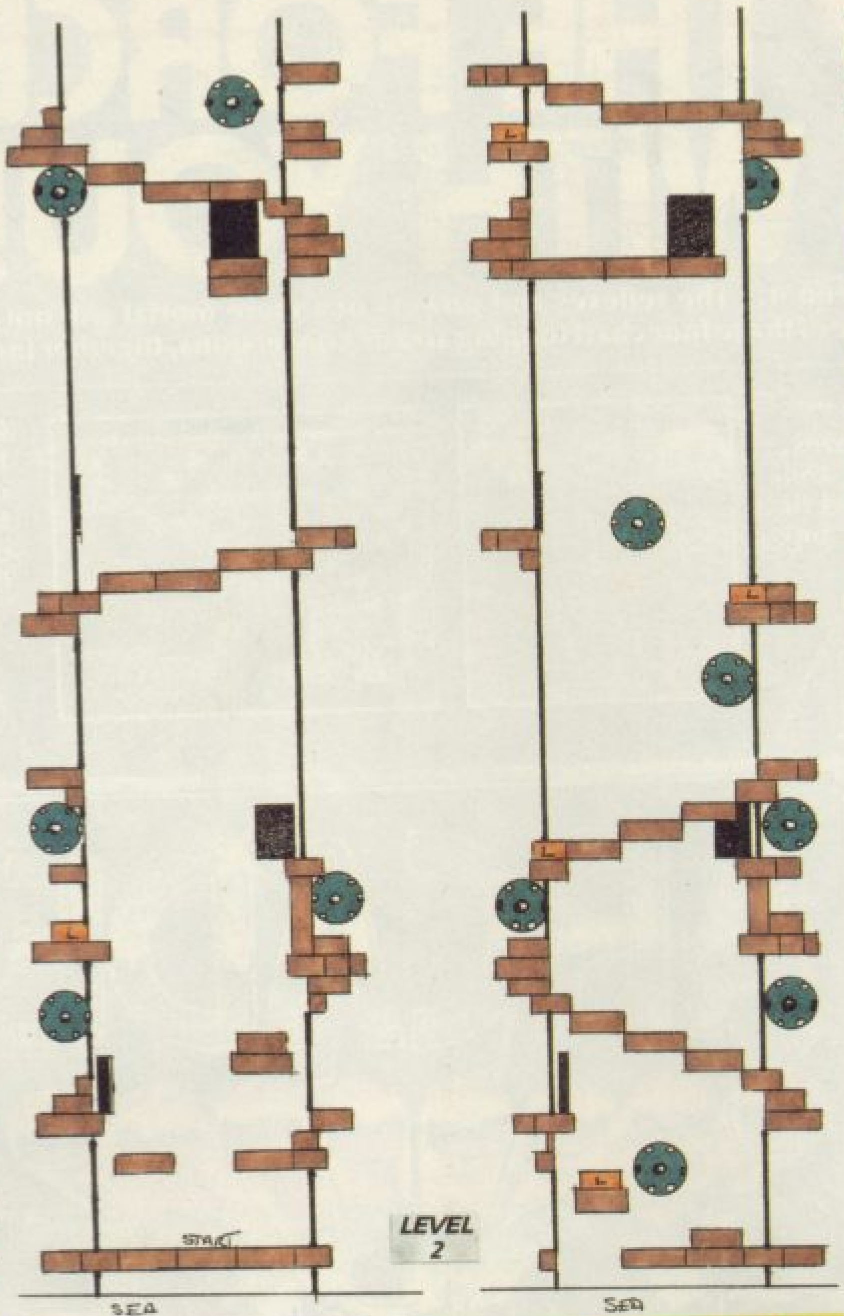
Clamber on board, shoot up and then get ready for a leap to the left. A roving eye will be oscillating (there's a big word) up and down and so on and it's necessary to jump over it. And it's easy. The main thing to remember here is that the game does not accept jumps if you press the key right at the edge of the block – you'll have to press it a bit before hand and it'll look like a massive balls up at first as your man rapidly loses height. But! So long as you have jumped as soon as the eye goes past your block, you should be OK. It takes practice.

Up the next lift, watching out for the occasional ooer (the funny fish-like spirally thing that appeas from the side of the screen) and you should soon arrive at the first door. Zoom through, but stay still when you reappear at the other side.

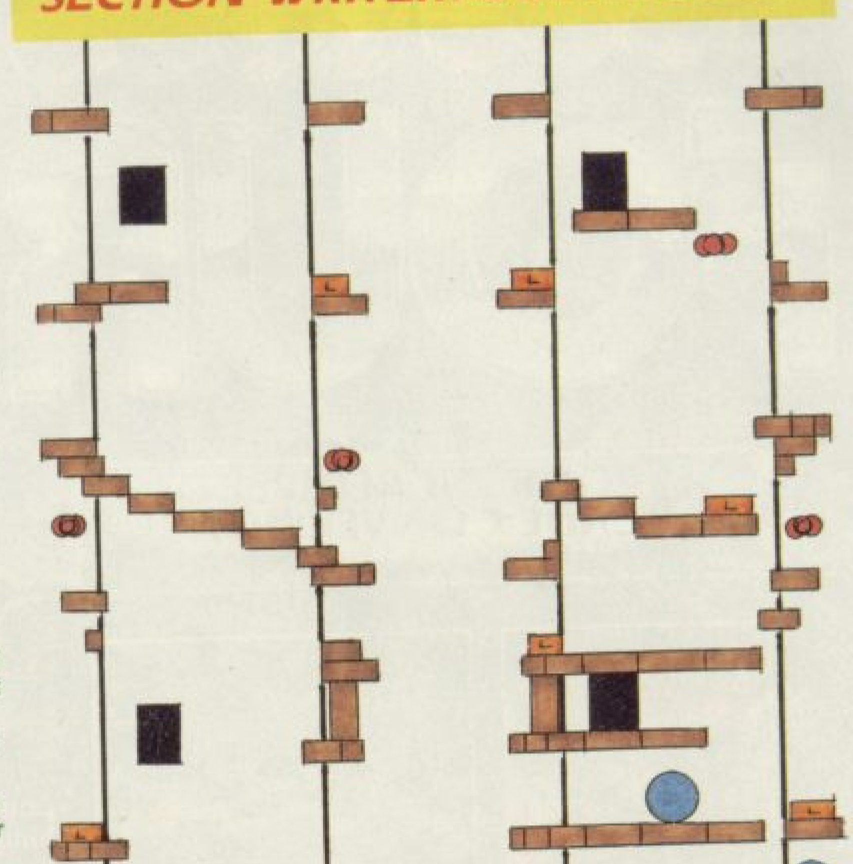
Watch out for the eye (Geddit?) and when it starts its upward path, dash underneath and onwards to yonder staircase. At the top, you should come across another lift – but don't jump straight on it! Yet another eye is in motion, moving from left to right. If you dash straight on to the lift, you may jolly well end up piling into an eye. Don't.

If you successfully manage to scramble on to the lift and zoom up, you'll find a door. Go in. When 'Blob' reappears, stop. A robot will be going up and down. Up and down. Make a panicky-runny-jumpy sort of thing over it when it is going down. And, by Jove, you should land on a lift. Which goes up. At the top you'll end up trudging down a flight of stairs. Only to arrive at another lift, which, interestingly enough, also goes up, and takes you up to another door. You may want to go in, but wait. There is a pretty mean robot swaying from left to right and if you time it wrong you'll collide with the robot on t'other side and be squashed. Therefore wait and time it. Lo and behold (at least that's what my Gran says) you'll find a lift. You'll be surprised to hear this also goes up. Up you go.

Nearly at the top now, stout yeomen. Immediately you arrive you'll notice a door. Don't go in. Instead, trudge up the staircase on your left, avoiding, whenever possible, the two robots which madly dash from left to right. It takes practice. You'll find a safe spot marked with an 's' on the map. At the very top, there will be a platform with three blocks, the middle one of which disappears. Wait until the robot disappears and then jump up and down on the middle block until it crumbles away. You'll fall on top of a lift which will 'lift' you to the exit and on to level 3.



STANDBY TO ACCESS: NEBULUS . . . Hewson
SECTION WRITER: JON RIGLAR



LEVEL 3

Level 3 is actually quite hard. At the start, Blob will appear at the edge of a block. Make sure you dash to the left and blast the ball before doing anything else. Don't go walking any further to the left on this set of blocks as they all disappear from then on. Into the door instead. Once around the other side, jump on the lift. This is different from the normal ones, you can actually go up two levels instead of one. And make sure you go right to the upper level as all the blocks on the middle level disappear. The top level is pretty confusing. There will appear to be nowhere to go. This is, of course, total brouhaha. Wait on the level until the spirally thing appears and bashes into Blob. He'll then fall on to the lower level where he can successfully blast the ball found therein. Trot along to the end of this level. You'll soon notice that the last block disappears and you fall back down to the lower level. This is OK – the block was erm, blocking, a lift. You can now jump on this lift and zoom up.

Blob will then find a door which will lead to the other side of the tower. Reappearing, he will fall a few centimetres to a set of blocks lower than the doorway. Here there is a lift and we meet the first of the skeletons: wait until it zooms upwards and then dash underneath and down the following staircase. Oh look, another skeleton. Dodge it, and hitch a ride on the nearby lift. Dash up the staircase on the left making sure you don't collide with yet another skeleton. At the top, you'll need to blast the two flashing squares – this will give you access to another lift. Dash into the nearby doorway, and then into the next one when Blob reappears, although the skeleton has an uncanny habit of bashing into Blob and it'll take a fair bit of practice to time it exactly. When you get up the apples and pears

More next month

NORTH STAR™

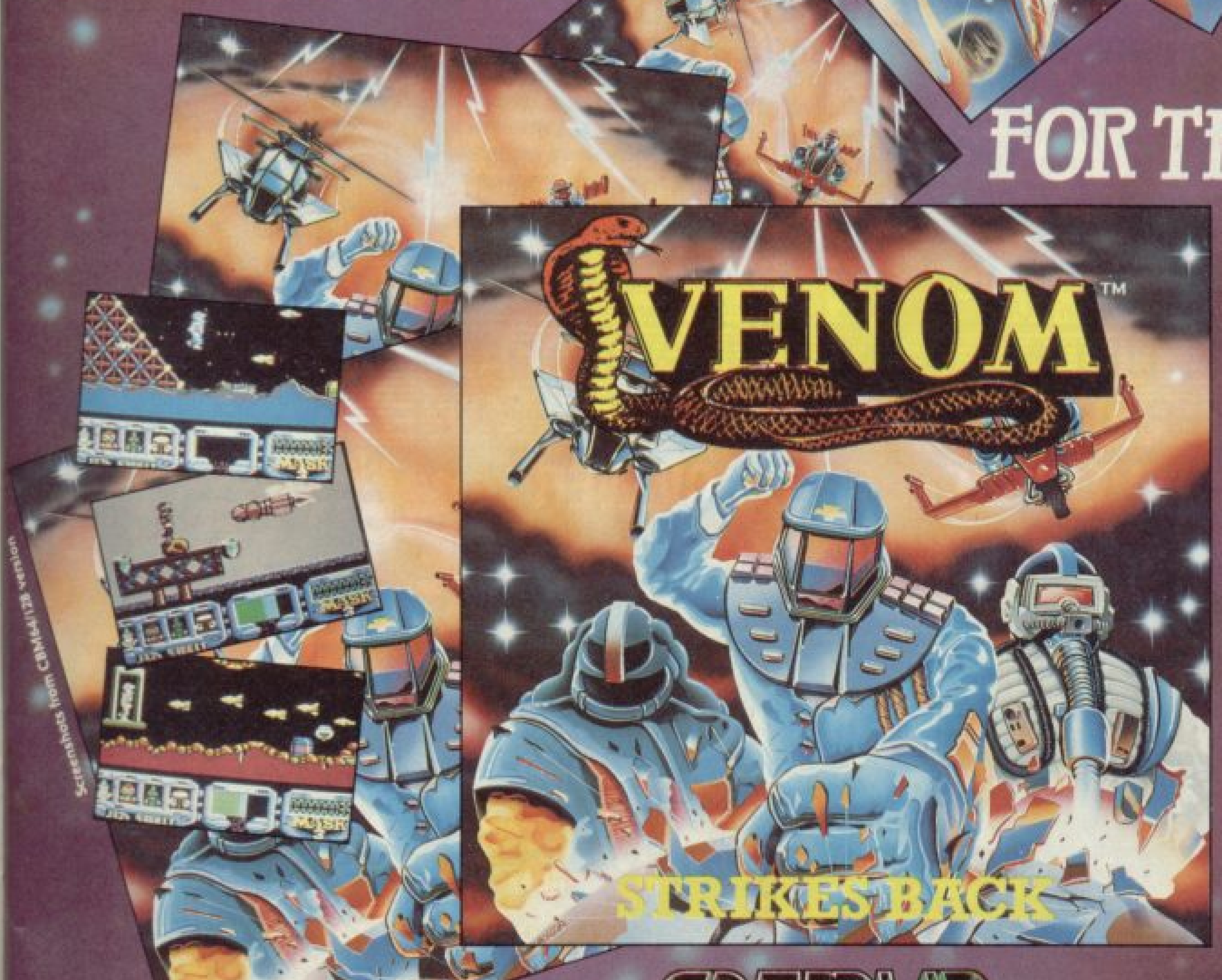
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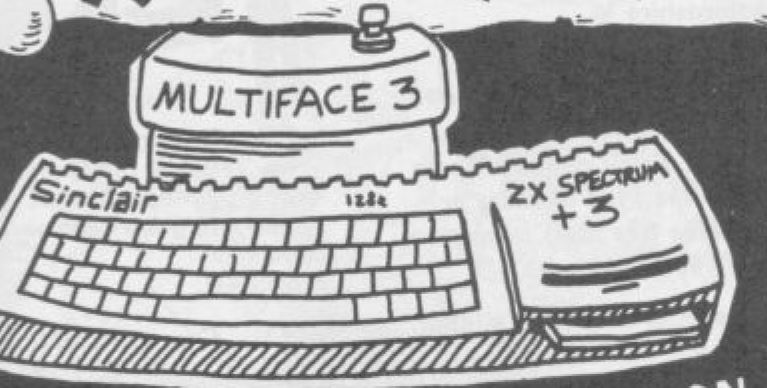
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1988 – THE YEAR OF THE ROBOT



SPECTRUM+3 – THE BEST ADD-ON FOR MULTIFACE 3

NOW YOU HAVE

"A GOOD REASON TO BUY SPECTRUM+3:" (Crash)

multiface three

"THE PLUS 3 DISC SOLUTION" (Sinclair User)

In the beginning there was the Spectrum. Lots of people bought one. Lots of other people wrote games for the Spectrum, and lots of people bought those as well.

But there was a snag – everything used cassette tapes, which were fine for *Depeche Mode* but not for so hot for computer software. Slow, unreliable and frustrating were some of the kinder terms used for the medium.

Now there's the 128K+3, a games machine that has all its software on tape and built in disc drive . . . Guess what Romantic Robot has produced?

Multiface 3, that's what. Plug it into your 128K+3, and load a game from tape. Press the red button and you can port it on to disc at any stage, yours to load in a trice at a whim's notice. Multiface works by waiting for the program to load and run. Then it takes a copy, and as the program was running at the time, it will run when the copy is loaded back later.

The tape to disc function of the Multiface 3 would be enough to recommend it to anyone. But there's more. When the red button is pressed, a whole range of functions appears. You can look through the 128K+3's memory, altering it at will. High scores have never been so easy to obtain. Memory can be displayed as hexadecimal, decimal or text. All of the 128K+3's 128K of Ram can be fiddled with, not just the 48K's worth that Basic has access to.

You can also print out areas of memory and screens in a variety of different forms. The Multiface 3 can do the same types of graphics dumps as its brother Multiprint, straight text, Spectrum-style *Copy* and a couple of shaded screen dumps. It can't do much more than 128K+3 Basic does, but it does it in the middle of programs.

The main purpose of the Multiface is to get things on to disc. As well as the simple *Save* and *Load*, it's got a few other tricks up its interface. You can, for example, use the disc from 48K mode. Lots of people get excited by this.

Other things that the Multiface can do is allow you to erase a file to make room on a disc, in case you need to save something in mid-game and can't get to Basic to do the deed. You can't *Format* a disc from the Multiface, alas.

Multiface also compresses stuff automatically, and doesn't *Save* empty areas of memory. These two features mean that you can get (for example) more than three games on the 170-odd K allowed you per disc side. But you can turn those features off, if need be.

Everything is accessed by the traditional one- or two-line menu and single keypresses. Multiface 3 is very careful about invalid inputs, and didn't crash or otherwise misbehave at all. And I did try to confuse it.

More than that, what can I say? I enjoy a good rant, most reviewers do, but the Multiface 3 seems set on continuing the Romantic Robot tradition of doing the job reliably. I can't even complain a little.

Any 128K+3 owner will find it a wonderful device, indispensible even – I'm not giving mine back without a fight. I expect to see the usual extra programs appear for the best in due course (Genie et al), whereupon not owning a Multiface 3 will brand one a complete loser■

EXCERPTS FROM REVIEW IN SINCLAIR USER NOVEMBER 1987



LIFEGUARD is an infinite life finder. Install it into the MULTIFACE 1 or 128, load a game, press the MULTIFACE's button and LIFEGUARD is ready to look for infinite lives, ammunition, etc. Once it finds it, your playing and score will never be the same – you'll win again and again – **and for £6.95 ONLY!**

All prices valid strictly by mail-order 1.3.1988 – 30.4.1988. GENIE works with MULTIPRINT, MULTIFACE 1 and 128 only. Programs saved by MULTIFACE 3 and tapes saved at hyper speed by MULTIFACE 128 do not run independently.

THE YEAR OF THE ROBOT · BE PART OF IT

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To the slopy bear, I am writing this comment for I am not satisfies with the way you little bears known as the Kamikaze may I say handle with offers. First of all in the February edition of **SU** on the half page of Birate Software on the one pound ninety-nine column it had Express Raiders in fancy black writing to show how great you's feal.

But thats nothing for if you eat carrots alot you will find on the other page is another list of games and express Raider was there too for five pund fifty pence.

Can you believe it, sutch a price. I wonder what person would send away for a pricy game like that. Havn't I proved a vital point?

Feargus McGivern
County Down
Northern Ireland

● ***You're obviously as mad as a boiled squirrel.***

I am having great difficulty in entering short Pokes, eg POKE 44490,12 on Metro Cross. I tried *Merging* it and *Loading* it, but this did not even load the game, it just said '4 OUT OF MEMORY, 0:1'.

Please could you tell me how you enter short Pokes, as I am sure that many other people would like to know.

Darren Morley
Whitby

● ***Kami can put you right. YA NEED A MULTIFACE DUMMIE! YA NEED TA READ THE ARTICLE IN THE LAST ISSUE DUMMIE!! YA NEED TO GET OUTTA MY FACE!!!!***

I am writing to tell you that there is a bug in my copy of Outrun on stage 15.

Chris Fenlon
Knowle
Bristol

● ***So what 'ya want me to do about it, uh? Anyone else got a problem with Outrun? Kamikaze wants to know so he can sort it out, once and for all.***

About 99 years ago (well, 2 actually) I entered a competition in a December issue of **SU**. Gasps of amazement all round, I won a copy of **Superman**.

Two months later I received a copy of **Enigma Force** and a letter of apology saying that **Superman** had been delayed.

Can you tell me if my postman has died, or if you just never sent me the game? I am getting rather fed up.

Jeffrey Grant
Hartcliffe
Bristol

● ***Geez — you got a prize, you gotta betta prize than Sooperman would ever have been. An' you know why? 'Cos Sooperman didn't happen 'cos Kamikaze said it wasn't good enough. So ya got a replacement, a nice 'sorry' letter, an' you're fed up? Well Kamikaze's fed up, no-one appreciates what he does for them, quit whining boy.***

Regarding my letter published February issue, you said that **Rolling Thunder** had not been reviewed, and I say it had.

To prove my point I enclose the review and a screen shot of my favourite game. So go away, yellow belly.

Lee Edwards
Colwyn Bay
Clwyd

● ***Yellow belly? You come here an' say that kid! Youse talking about the coin-op, sure we did a bit of a review of that, but what matters in SU is the Speccy version, so we're right an' you're wrong, so Kamikaze doesn't want to hear any more about it!***

Your February front cover says, 'Still only £1 GASP!' This usually indicates a price increase of some sort, so why don't you cut the crap and give it to the readers straight?

Keith Taylor
Grimsby
South Humberside

Kamikaze never likes to tell people they're wrong, so just for you Keithy — babes, we put up the price. Anyone got any complaints, we'll give you Keith's address and you can call him yourselves — OK?

On the subject of adventures, I think that you ought to tidy up the adventure section of the magazine.

Visually it looks like it's been put together using scissors and a pot of glue. It amazes me that Gordo puts up with it!

Richard Hewison
Luton
Bedfordshire

● ***Try saying that to the Soceress and see if you can walk afterwards! Adventures have changed. Gordo's gone off on a dork to the Land of Tharg or something like that, so everyone should be happy now.***

This letter is not just a letter, it's a mind-boggling question.

In this space age world of ours, that has a stupid, over-weight, over-generous plonker like Jon Riglar hosting ZapChat, do you know of a game that has a pig as the hero?

I am an avid lover of pigs, and I would be very grateful if you could tell me where I can get a game that has a pig as the central character. If you don't know of course, I'll have to shave your fur off.

You have been warned!

Paul Cheeze Tinsley
Pill
Bristol

● ***There's a game called Piggy by Bug Byte that has a pig in it, but Kamikaze thinks it looks more like a rabbit!***

And while I'm talking to you buddy, you try and shave off my fur and I'll have you interred in Sing-Sing. Geddit? (Anyone who calls 'emselves 'cheeze' deserves to be shot anyhow).

I don't want to sound as though I'm bragging but I've finished **Freddy Hardest** (skill, aren't I)?



*Send your letters to 'Tell it to the Bear,' **SU** Mega-Control, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU*

The thing I want to know is, will there be a sequel? At the end it says 'To be continued in **Freddy Hardest of South Manhattan**'.

I'd like to add that **SU** is the best Speccy mag around.

Simon Pallout
Cheshire

● ***If you're so 'skill' you should know if there is going to be a sequel or not shouldn't ya?***

Psssst, want some money? Us old incorruptibles at SU have got a crisp ten pound Um. . . cheque just waiting for you as reward for your contribution to a brand new feature called:

PRAISE SU TO THE SKIES!!

All you have to do is write us the most over the top, excessive, fulsome, extravagent, extreme letter of praise we've ever seen. The most truly superlative each month will win ten pounds! Here's the sort of thing we mean:

To these wonderful, wonderful people at SU,

Please tell me, are you human? There is no human on Earth that could write a magazine with the same instant appeal, the same quality, the same superb design and style that makes you go all. . .oooh. . . just by looking at it. I, for one, trust every single one of your reviewers and recently burnt down my local computer store because it stocked Ninja Nurses in the Ward of Doom which you rated 0.

Yours in extreme admiration,

A. Nonny-Mouse

Send your letter to:
"You really are totally fab and I'm not just saying that for the money" SU Mega Control, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU
Don't forget to include your name and address.

TO THE BEAR!



You got a comment? You got something to say? You got an opinion about what's good and bad. Wanna praise the mag? Wanna heap some indignation and kick a few butts? Don't keep it to yourself, just put your thoughts down on paper and TELL IT TO THE BEAR!

Kamikaze don't mess around. I'll print anything that got something to say with a name and address on it (No address no printy yellowbelly) you jus tell me all about it and send your message to 'Tell it to the Bear', SU Central, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU

Your mag is mag! Special your Poke City, but (just one but) the Pokes are only for new games. Why don't you print some Pokes for older games such as **Green Beret**, **Commando**, etc (or can't you break in)??

I'd lke to order a few back issues too, how and when can I do that?

Frank Engelen
Belgium

● ***You're foreign, aren't you kid?***

I think you should have a table every month with the games that are going to be released in the coming month, so we know when we can buy these games. This is all because I saw that **Soldier of Light** would be out before Christmas, and here we are in February, and it's nowhere to be found. This table would be an absolutely fab idea. I think so anyway.

Martin Jom
Near Westbury
Wiltshire

● ***Oh ya do, do ya? Well Kamikaze doesn't. The reason we can't do that is 'cos the manufacturers don't always get the dates right themselves, programmers break their legs, wipe the program and things like that. We started printing a "you can buy this game now" table, we'd soon be in trouble. And where'd 'ya read that 'bout Soldier of Light anyhow, not here, that's for sure. Grrr . . .***



I have noticed a very silly mistake in your February issue. You said that there were 365 days in 1988, and you're wrong because this year is a Leap Year, so there are 366 days in 1988, didn't you learn eney thing at school?

Apart from that, the mag was perfect.

Ian Dawney
Sheerness
Kent

● ***We were going to give 500 quid for spotting the mistakes, but unfortunately even we know that you spell "eney thing" "anything", so we're just going to have to set the Dobermans on you instead. Sorry.***

Huh! You limeys have got no idea, you're just plain dumb! You think us Californians spend all day relaxin', a-surfin' and a-skatin' an' so on. An' some chump goes an' programs a program about it, an' he calls it **California Games**, an' you Brits go wild about it, an' call it the best sports sim around. The graphics on this game are mutant, really mutant!! In a word, they're KRAP!!

A few for instances . . .

1 Roller skatin' – How can you skate down a sidewalk and not bump into anyone?
2 Surfin' – How can you surf and not bump into anyone or get eaten by a shark or somebody?
3 BMX-in' – No comment.

In a nutshell, the graphics are crud, price too high, standard too low, overall standard, useless. More like 0.8 stars than 8.

Theo Huxtable
Santa Barbara
USA

PS Actually I live in Manchester in Lancashire, but do not, under any circumstances, print this.

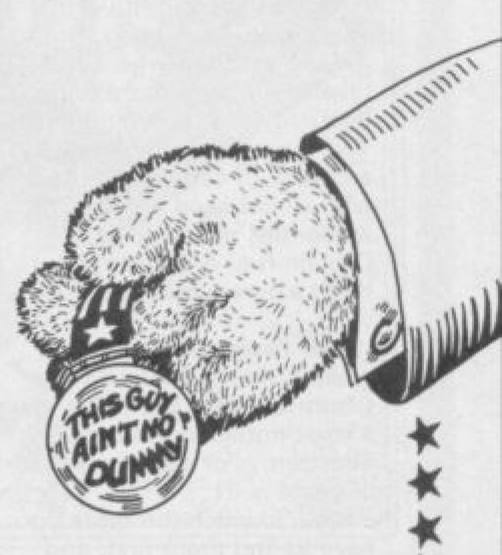
● ***OK punk – we won't.***

When I bought **Combat School** I read the instructions and it says that in the Iron Man Race there is canoeing to do. When I get to water I can't find the damned thing!

Does anybody know where the canoe is?

Paul Watkins
West Glamorgan
South Wales

● ***Nope.***



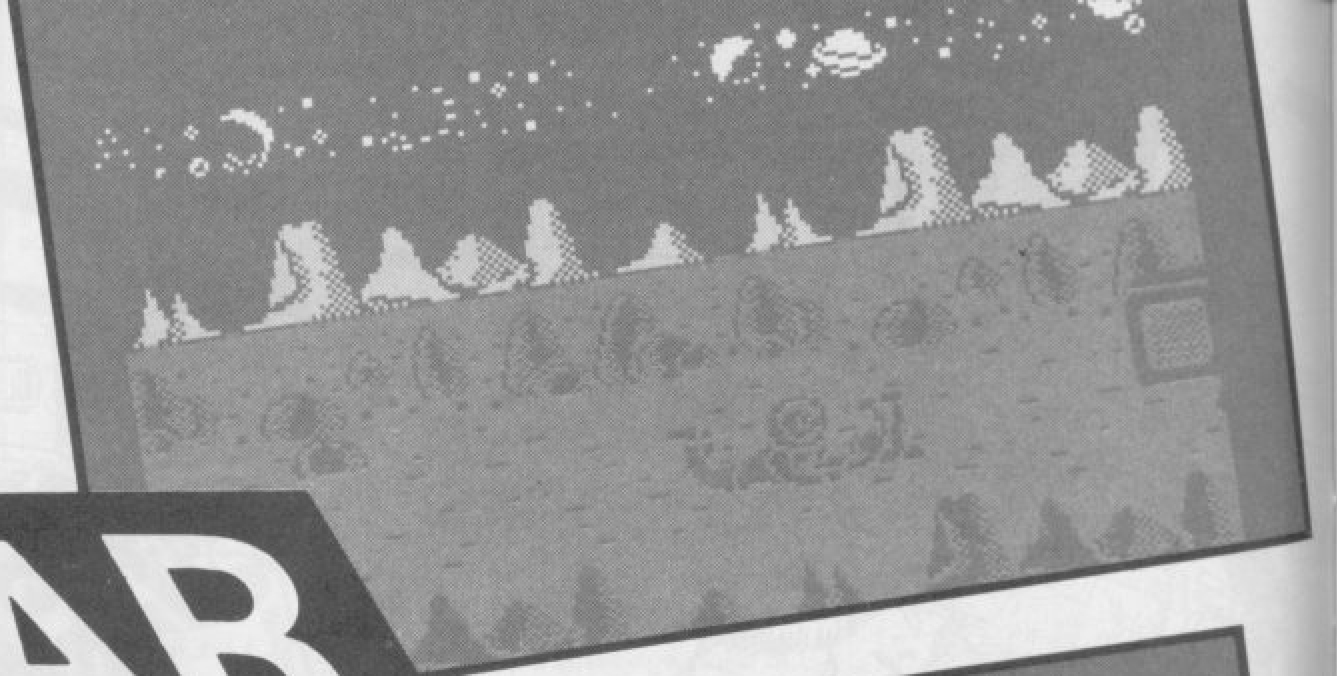
I am writing this letter in the hope that you can help me. I own a 48K Spectrum and a General Electrics TXP 8100 printer. I am hoping to write labels and spread sheets with the printer. I have heard of a tape **Mini Office 2** available on the Spectrum but have had no success finding it.

With your vast knowledge of computer software companies, do you think that you could find out for me how I can get this program by post. I read your magazine every month and find it very interesting.

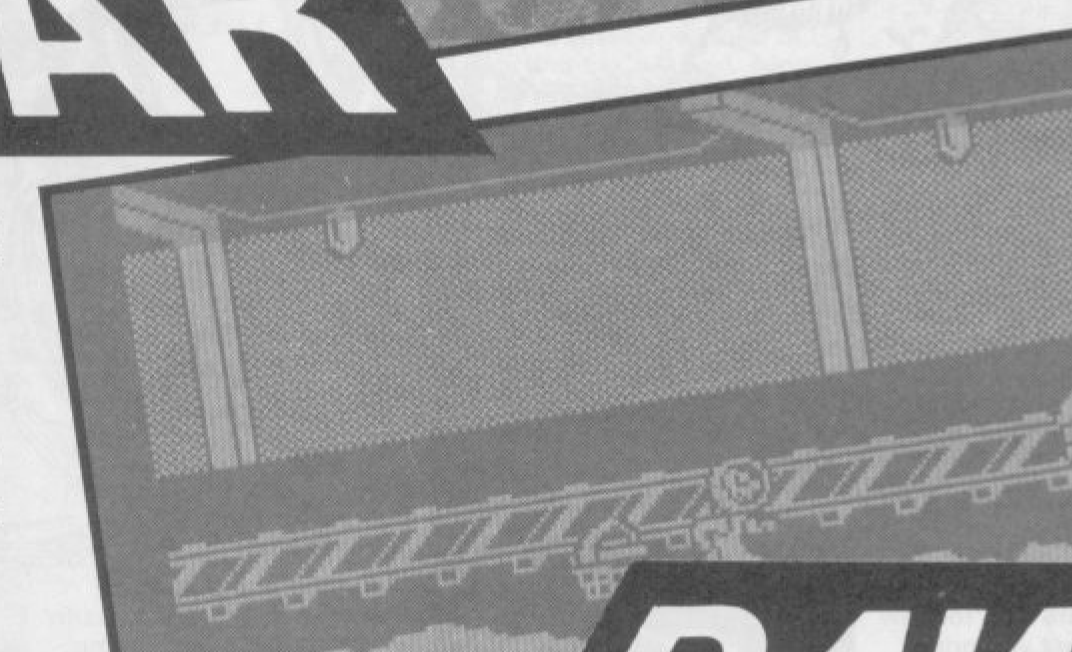
Sergeant Edward Purcell
2 Armoured Delivery Squadron

● ***Always pleased to try and help a fellow military officer. Try this: Database, Europa House, Adlington Park, Adlington. Macclesfield, Cheshire.***

ARCADE ★ REVIEW



STAR



PAWS

The Tasty Space Griffin. Dreamt of by many, eaten by few. The TSG was one of the universe's rarest and most delicious delicacies and for some reason has been illegal for a long time. It has recently been reported that a gang of mercenary farmers have been breeding these fowl foul (shouldn't that be foul fowl?) and have plans to disable the entire universal monetary system by flooding the market with their new investments.

You, as Captain Rover Pawstrong, have been sent to the secret moon where the rebels hide their marauding flocks to catch or kill the birds. You were sent completely by accident, of course. After all, who would send a dog? The authorities meant to send Captain Neil Armstrong, but that's a bureaucratic cock-up for you.

Star Paws was a great hit when it was released on the C*mm*d*re 64, but will it make a large impact on the Spectrum? For a start, what sort of game is it?

Well, to catch the birds you have to find them first, and there are 20 of them to look out for. Finding them is easy, thanks to your little space radar, but catching them is another matter. The game is spread over a multitude of levels and all have their own little obstacles. On the first level, there are lots of little rocks which trip you up or bounce you the other way. When you go underground for all the remaining levels, however, it's a completely different bucket of carrots.

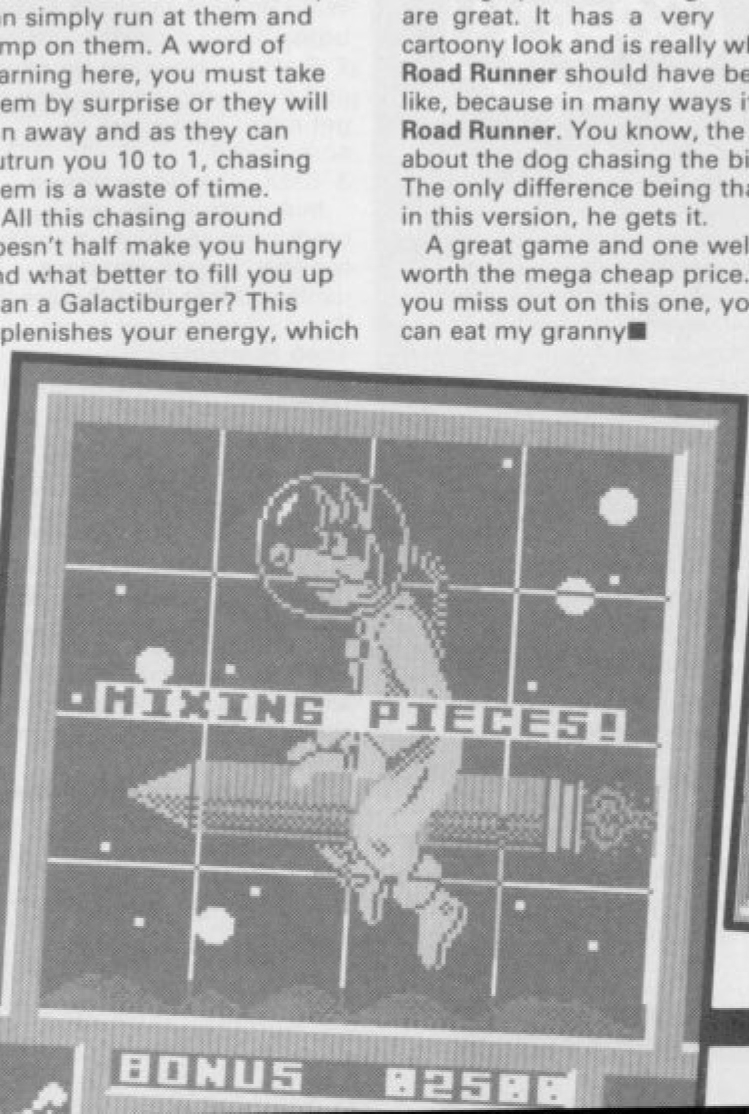
Unless you have a mining lamp, you won't be able to see where you are going. And if you can't see where you're going, you won't be able to see the birds which means you won't be able to catch them. Speaking of said objective...

How do you catch the birds? Well, it's not that simple. There are many different ways to 'catch the pigeon'. You can search the boxes that lie around to see if they contain anything that you can use as a weapon against the birds, such as rocket launchers or death rays. Or you can simply run at them and jump on them. A word of warning here, you must take them by surprise or they will run away and as they can outrun you 10 to 1, chasing them is a waste of time.

All this chasing around doesn't half make you hungry and what better to fill you up than a Galactiburger? This replenishes your energy, which is displayed as a vanishing turkey, a bit like the golden oldie, **Atic Atac**.

The graphics on this game are great. It has a very cartoony look and is really what **Road Runner** should have been like, because in many ways it is **Road Runner**. You know, the bit about the dog chasing the bird. The only difference being that in this version, he gets it.

A great game and one well worth the mega cheap price. If you miss out on this one, you can eat my granny■

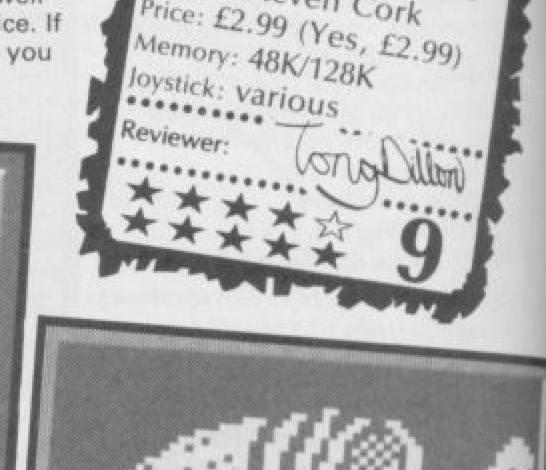


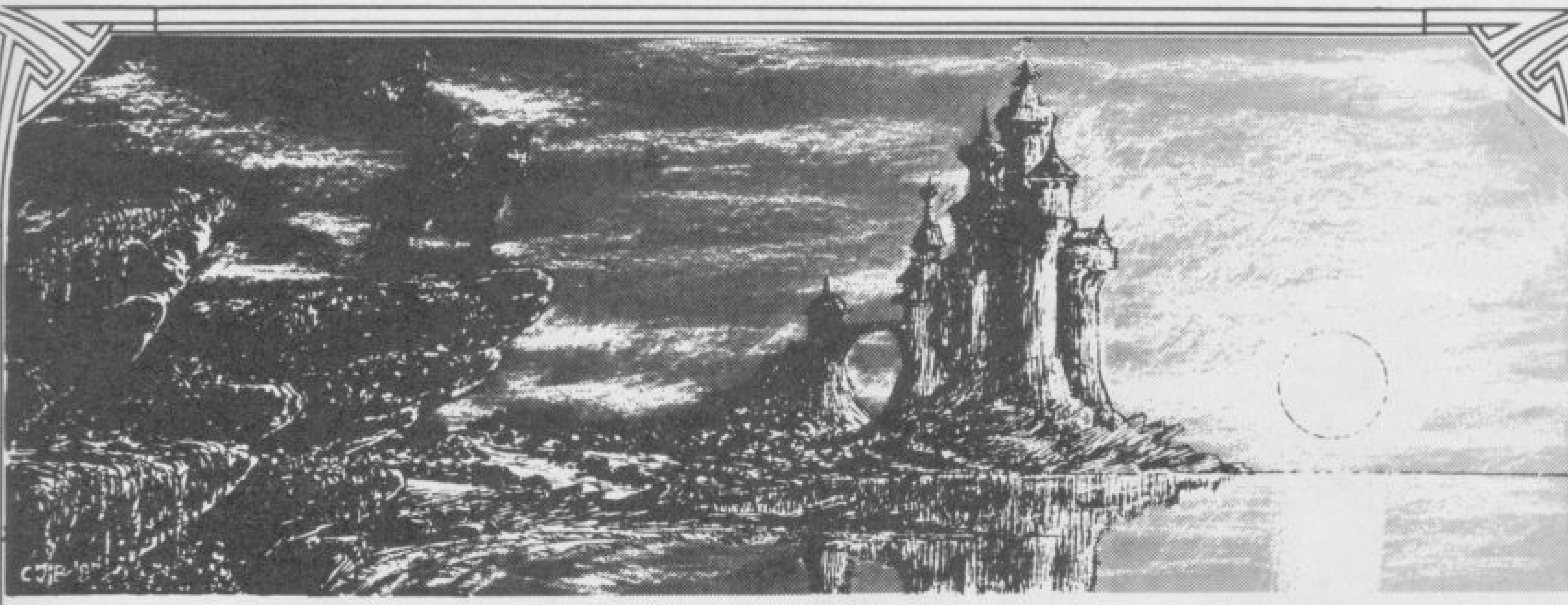
FAXBOX

Wonderful cartoon adventure through space, you'd be mad to miss it, at this price.

STAR PAWS
Label: Software Projects
Author: Steven Cork
Price: £2.99 (Yes, £2.99)
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various
Reviewer: Tony Dillon

★★★★☆
★★★★★ 9





AVALON

THE KNIGHTS OF THE AVALON

The Chronicles of 'THE KNIGHTS OF THE AVALON' is a fantasy-based Play By Mail game from JADE Games, where players seek to establish, through trade, colonisation, politics, religion and conquest, empires.

For a free start up write to JADE Games with future turn costs from as little as 80p or ring 0705 828271 for an immediate start up.

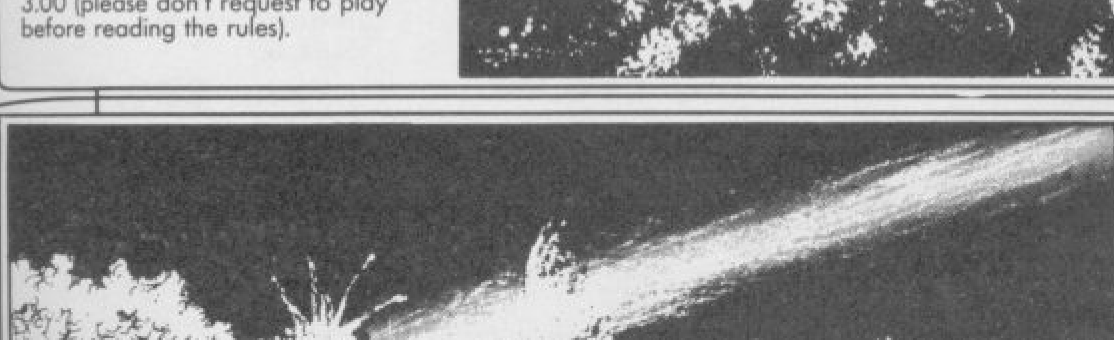
FREE

NEW ORDER

For centuries your civilization has suspected the existence of intelligent life on other planets. Until now you could do no more than speculate about the mysterious radio signals that your scientists have occasionally intercepted. However with the recent development of the hyperjump engine, conditions have become right to reach out and attempt to create a NEW ORDER to link the stars. Will the dominant species in that NEW ORDER be yours, or that of some alien lifeform? In NEW ORDER you get the chance to find out!

NEW ORDER is a detailed game of space exploration, the rule book costs 3.00 (please don't request to play before reading the rules).





JADE GAMES

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The rogue moon Phosphor has almost destroyed life on the planet's surface – causing world wide earthquakes, flooding and volcanic activity.

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Startup costs 5.00, with further turns 1.50, includes postage both ways.

SHATTERED WORLD

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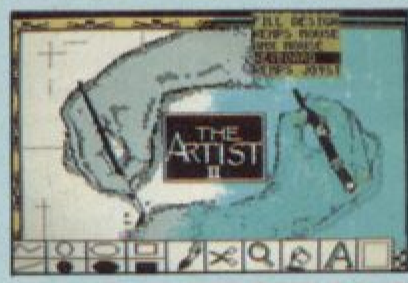
DATEL ELECTRONICS



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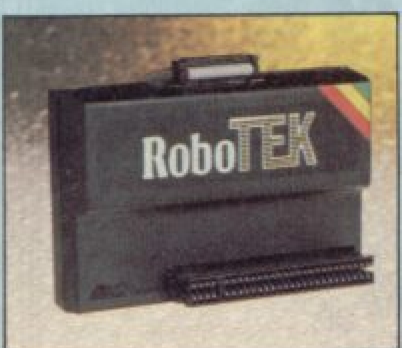
ARTIST II ILLUSTRATOR

- Top quality graphics package for Spectrum.
- Described by Sinclair User as "the best artist program – bar none".
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- Pull down menus.
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- Font and sprite designer.
- Zoom mode.
- Supports many printers.
- Flexible cut & paste.
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- 4 independently controllable outputs for relays, models, lights etc.
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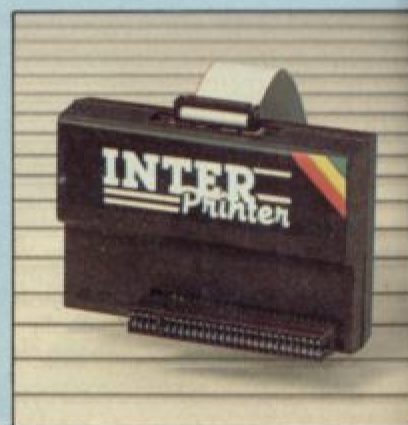
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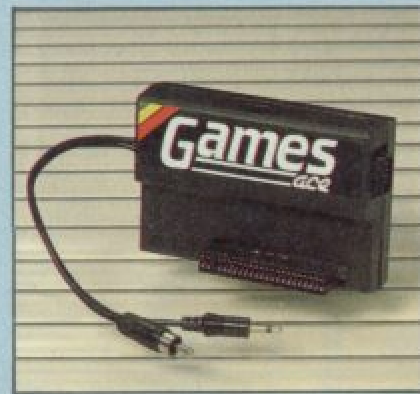
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ROBOTARM — Full Function with 5 Axis movement

- ❑ Explore the fascinating science of Robotics with this fantastic full feature Robot Arm.
- ❑ Human like dexterity – with 5 axis of movement it is so versatile it can manipulate and pick up any object as small as a paper cup or as big as a tennis ball.
- ❑ Easily controlled using 2 joysticks (any 9 pin type) or connectd to your Spectrum with our special Interface/Software to give Computer/Robotic control. (See Interface offer).
- ❑ Comes with complete range of accessories including: Standard Grip Jaws to mimic finger type grip; Magnetic Finger Adaptor with release mechanism; Shovel Attachment for materials handling; 4 Stabilising Legs for heavier lifting jobs.
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INTERFACE OFFER

- ❑ Unique Interface/Software package to allow you to Interface and control the Robotarm with your Spectrum.
- ❑ Train mode allows you to store and then repeat arm movement sequences.
- ❑ Computer and Robotic control is a major subject in schools and colleges – this is a unique introduction.
- ❑ Very easy to use.
- ❑ This Interface is not needed to be able to use Robotarm but it makes possible interfacing the the Robotarm/Computer.

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ARCADE REVIEW

BLACK LAMP



Since the theft of the enchanted lanterns from Allegoria, evil forces have been doing their worst in the land. Apart from having to raise court morale, Jolly Jack the jester is nursing delusions of grandeur and is hopelessly in love with the king's daughter Grizelda. Her father, true to form, doesn't approve. The king can see a chance both to get rid of his daughter's unwelcome suitor and retrieve his lanterns by sending Jack off on the quest to fetch them back.

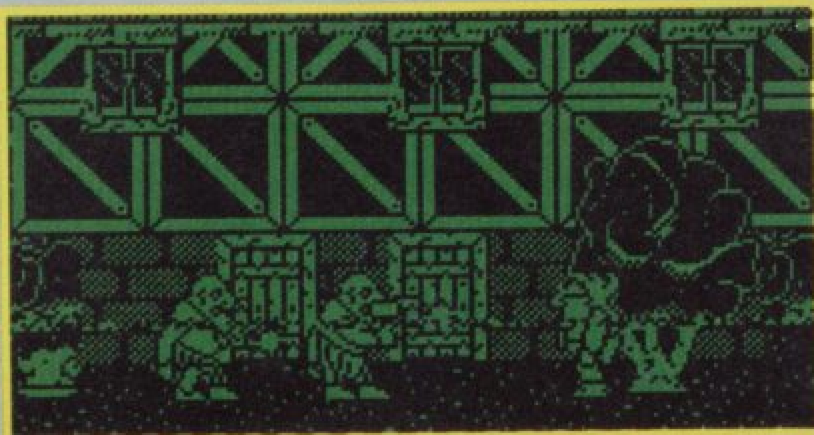
This brings us to the opening scenes of Firebird's **Black Lamp**. Quite what Grizelda sees in Jolly Jack is unclear, since Jack is rather on the stubby and chubby side, and looks distinctly downtrodden and gloomy as he sets off on his trek. It's something of a tribute to the game's graphics and animation that you can actually see this on the Spectrum.

Black Lamp is a horizontal flip-from-screen-to-screen arcade adventure, set in and around the buildings of Allegoria. Scattered over the screens are a number of lamps which Jack must collect and take back to store in one of several coloured chests in various locations. He can only carry one lamp at a time, so once you've got one, you must hunt for a suitable chest before collecting the next.

Your way will be blocked by a wide variety of baddies motivated by the evil forces which took the lanterns in the first place. These won't necessarily kill you outright, but will deplete your energy level. The baddies range from werewolves, which flash past and don't drain off too much energy, through spitting witches and buzzards with explosive droppings, which are rather more harmful and should be avoided. You, as Jack, can ward them all off with bolts of magic from your belt, but some creatures take more shots to kill than others.

Aside from magic bolts, Jack can prolong his survival by grabbing useful objects lying around the place. A weapon, such as an axe, will make him impervious to baddies for 20 hits; a harp will give him musical 'bounce' and enable him to jump off high levels to the floor without injury; food and drink will top up his energy rating.

Although Jack basically trudges left and right between screens, he can also climb ladders and jump on to objects to reach shelves and gangways above floor level where many of the useful objects can be found. There is also some pseudo forward and back movement; if a rear exit is shown on screen, Jack can flip on to the screen 'behind', and similarly, markers at the foot of the screen appear when he can move on to a 'forward' screen.



Although based on the time-worn theme of exploring, killing, avoiding and collecting various objects, **Black Lamp** is extremely well implemented. The graphics, in a single colour against a black background (apart from the highly coloured chests) are clear and detailed, while Jack himself is beautifully animated, plodding doggedly on from screen to screen. The game oozes atmosphere, whcih makes it a pleasure to play – it truly is a shock to suddenly find yourself face to face with the dragon, for example. The accompanying music is surprisingly boppy; on other versions Jack wanders along to a rendering of *Greensleeves,* and although I *think* I can hear *Greensleeves*-ish bits in the Spectrum music, there's some hip hop in there too.

Another nice touch is the random starting screen for each game, and the fact that the lanterns, weapons, food, harps etc, will be located in different places each time you play, so that no game will be exactly the same as any other.

I liked **Black Lamp** enormously, although it's not without its minor irritants. I found the controls (joystick or redefinable keyboard) slightly slow to respond; quick about-turns to blast away at nasties on either side being largely in vain. Also Jack must be facing in exactly the right direction to move back or forward a screen or to climb up or down ladders, which requires a certain amount of fiddly manipulation when all you really want to do is get the hell out of the firing line. At the beginning of the game you'll find Jack moves slowly, but he will speed up progressively as the quest continues.

This is definitely a major contender for search and collect game of the month. Not too much adventuring to get in the way of all that blasting■

FAXBOX

An excellently playable arcade adventure with atmospheric graphics, detailed animation and a very appealing hero

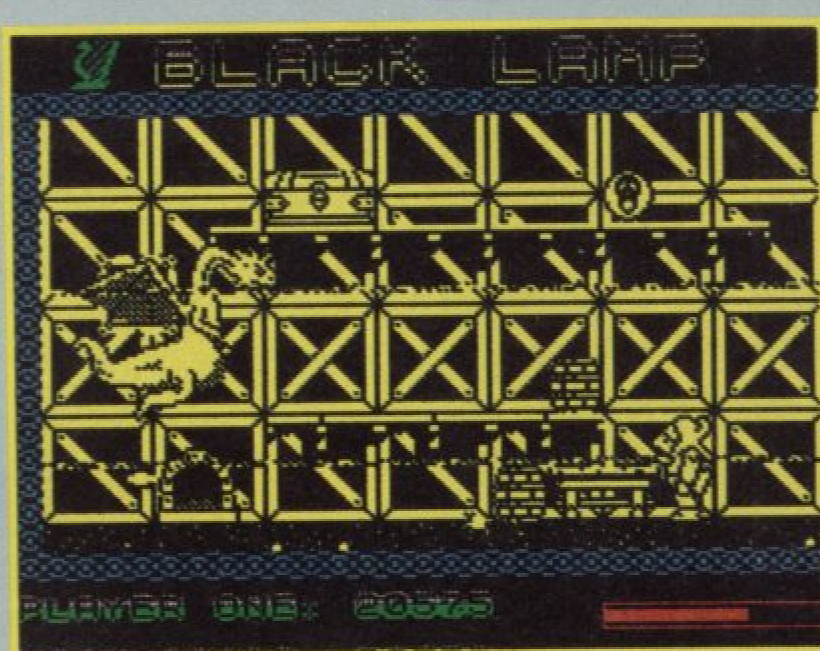
BLACK LAMP
Label: Firebird
Author: Mike Follin
Price: £7.95
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Christina Erskine

★★★★★★★★★☆ 9

HINTS AND TIPS

- Witches and goblins will drain your energy – avoid.
- There is always a storage chest on the screen where the game starts, so if you're wandering around with a lamp and can't find a chest, try making your way back to the start.
- Differently coloured lamps score different points. If you're carrying a low-score lamp, you can swap for a higher scoring one simply by walking over it. To hang on to your original lamp, you'll need to jump over or avoid any others you come across.
- To kill dragons: they are only vulnerable when hit on certain parts of the body and you'll need to get up to their level. Once on the same level as the dragon, blast continuously and hold your ground.



1

ARKANOID 2

£1·00 OFF

SU SMASH OFFER

REVENGE OF DOH

Send coupon (and your name and address) to: Revenge of Doh Smash Offer, Ocean Software, 6 Central Street, Manchester M6, along with a your cheque/postal order for £6.95 made payable to Ocean Software. Offer closes May 31.

Just when you thought it was safe to load a game into your Spectrum, Ocean goes and releases Revenge of Doh, **a game destined to send you completely round the twist and back.**

Based on the tongue-raspingly addictive oldster Breakout **– and the direct sequel to its earlier smash** Arkanoid **–** Revenge **has 66 screens of absolute mayhem, along with fab graphics, fast action and a scrolling background just to make things a little more difficult.**

Slam that ball against the bricks, get those dreadfully useful bonus pills, watch out for things that'll shrink your thingy. (Ooer)!

Now, unless you're a dongle from the planet Kretin, you'll want to take advantage of our wonderful offer and save yourself £1 off the price that most people will have to pay in the shops.

And what do you have to do? Yes, congratulations, mastermind. Cut out the coupon here and send it off to the address along with cheque, etc. And within the fluttering of a gnat's eyelash, a copy of the game will be plopping on to your Welcome mat.

A bad deal? We think not. If you do, you're obviously completely doolally■

SMASH OFF

2

ATF

£1·00 OFF

SU SMASH OFFER

ATF

Send coupon (and your name and address) to: ATF Smash Offer, Digital Integration, Watchmoor Trading Centre, Watchmoor Road, Camberley, Surrey, along with a your cheque/postal order for £7.95 made payable to Digital Integration. Offer closes May 31.

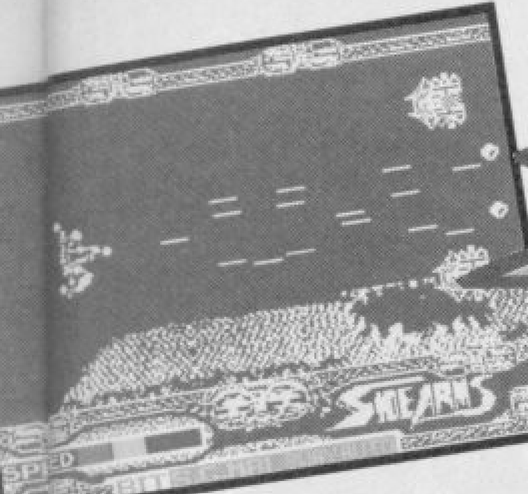
Rumour has it that somewhere deep in the heart of nowhere (now there's a good title for a song) there's a plane being built, that's sooo secret, the people who are building it aren't even sure that it exists (bear with me, I'm creating an atmosphere). And the reason it's so secret, is because it's going to be very high-tech, and very well equipped with all sorts of highly destructive weapons. Rumour also has it, that this plane was the inspiration behind Digital Integration's fabby **ATF.**

Thus we have the need for great secrecy. The next piece of information could well prove to be dangerous in the wrong hands, so I'm going to whisper.

ATF is so brill that we want everyone to play it. We don't want anyone hiding in a dark corner and complaining that they can't afford it. We just want you to have a good time, OK?

Now we know that you'll complain that training to be a fighter pilot is desperately expensive and you really don't have time to go to the shops to buy a copy of **ATF** anyway, since Ironside's just about to come on the telly. **SU** yet again comes to the rescue, with one of our truly splendiferous Money Off Coupons, that allow you to order your game with a whole quid off. Send a parent of your choice to the Post Office with a cheque, and wait for your game to arrive in about a month's time■





CAPCOM SIDE ARMS

3

US Gold's biggest licence since *Outrun* is indubitably *Side Arms*. You take the role of one of the most heavily armed soldiers in the galactic army, sent on a mission to destroy an alien planet with enough defence systems to keep even the toughest alien-blaster on the edge of his seat.

It's a scrolling shoot-out with the biggest graphics you've ever seen and more action going on at any one time than anything we've ever encountered.

In fact, you'll probably have been virtually incapacitated by our fabbo review on page 84, and you won't even be able to get out of your armchair to buy it from the shop. Solution: get out your laser-snippaz, cut out the coupon and send it to the address shown. If you can find a weeble to go to the post box for you, you won't even need to get up.

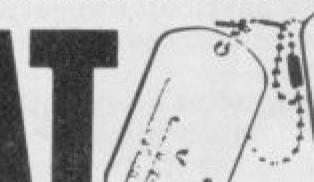
And, as if that isn't enough, you get a whole pound off the regular price. So you get US Gold's fab game very quickly and you actually make a saving without making any effort whatsoever. It's almost unbelievable, isn't it? Well, you'd better believe it■

£1·00 OFF — SU SMASH OFFER

SIDE ARMS

Send coupon (and your name and address) to: Side Arms Smash Offer, US Gold, Units 2/3 Holford Way, Birmingham B6 7AX. Also include your cheque/postal order for £7.99 made payable to US Gold. Offer closes May 31.

SMASH OFFER

PLATN

4



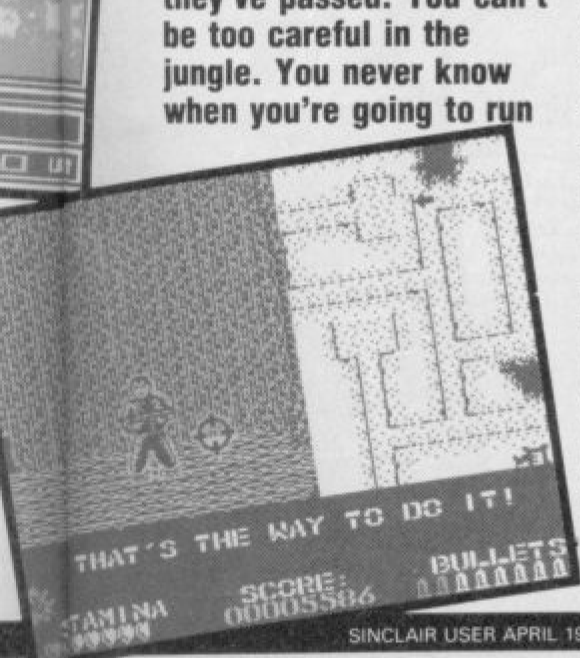
Dive for cover! Quickly! Over into the bushes there, before they see us. Now stay down. Wait 'til they've passed. You can't be too careful in the jungle. You never know when you're going to run into a bunch of sticky, sweaty little scumbags, all out, stalking the paths, looking for one thing – a copy of Ocean's Platoon.

But you're no dummy. They're not going to get the drop on you. You've got a whole pocketful of bananas more sense than those goof-balls. By the time they get down to their shop, all those lovely shiny boxes that Ocean are packaging the game in will be snapped up and half way to Timbuktoo.

No. You've got a far more sensible idea. From the safety of your fox-hole, under cover of your own lines, you can get yourself a copy of the game with no risk whatsoever.

Look. Here's all you have to do. First of all, check out our review in last month's issue. Now, make sure that Platoon **is the game for you. Shouldn't be any doubts, really. OK. Next, clip out the coupon, stick it in an envelope with a cheque for the appropriate amount (see figure in the box) and whistle up a runner to take the thing to the nearest message-despatch station.**

And by the time the next issue of SU comes out, you'll have your own copy of the game with all the frills, including Smokey Robinson's crooning on a free tape inside. And you get a discount of £1. Not to be sneezed at■



£1·00 OFF — SU SMASH OFFER

PLATOON

Send coupon (and your name and address) to: Platoon Smash Offer, Ocean Software, 6 Central Street, Manchester M6, along with a cheque/postal order for £8.95 made payable to Ocean Software. Offer closes May 31.

BACKGROUND NOISE

ATF

The idea behind ATF was to design a game based on an aircraft of the next generation. The aircraft in question was the futuristic (and top secret!) YF-22A, also referred to as the Advanced Tactical Fighter or ATF for short. The prototype is currently being designed and built by Lockheed, Boeing and General Dynamics in California U.S.A. and is scheduled to make its first flight in 1990.

Our usual sources of information and facts revealed that the 'plane was chockablock with some amazing features, but Lockheed were obviously unwilling to provide us with data that could in any way be termed confidential. Despite this we did manage to piece together sufficient information to form a framework for the game including the 'electronic co-pilot' and automatic, "terrain following." We figured that the missing pieces could be filled by our imagination to maximise playability.

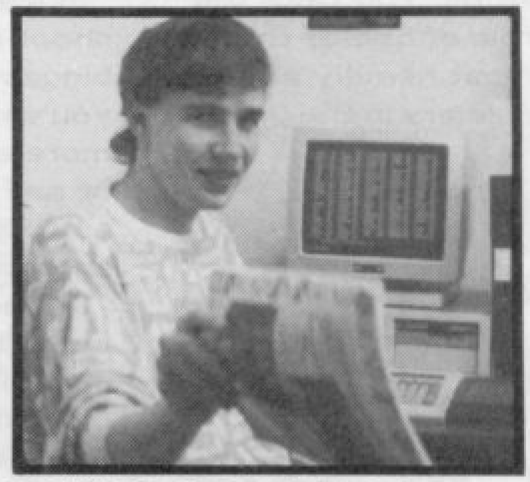
So, instead of concentrating on accuracy, other aspects took top priority. The most important of these was that the game should feature fast arcade style action whilst still offering a strong underlying strategic element. A new kind of 3D relief terrain was developed to emphasise the low level ground hugging capabilities of the ATF.

Initially the 3D relief terrain was generated by mathematically calculating all of the visible points for every frame of the action. The system worked, but was simply too slow to ever pass as 'arcade action'. Instead, a new technique was developed that used a complex co-ordinate referencing system which avoided the need for time consuming division and multiplication. To prevent any screen flicker, each frame of the action was generated in a dummy screen, and when complete was copied at full speed into the real screen. The dummy screen was actually larger than the real screen and only a window of it was copied down to provide neat, gradual vanishing of objects and terrain off the edges of the screen.

The other important aspect of ATF, the war strategy, was vital to provide the game with an objective and long term appeal. We decided that no fundamental compromises would be made on this front and that the 'war model' as we referred to it would appear as realistic and natural as possible. Five types of ground forces, sea forces, communications bases and factories. All of these objects interact with each other in true warfare style and with various consequences if damaged or destroyed. Factories, for example, supply the military hardware and if destroyed will result in a gradual depletion of forces, since tanks and ships are destroyed but not replaced. Each kind of object also has its own 'favourite' target to go for – enemy sea forces for example have a particular appetite for allied sea forces and coastal land objects.

The kind of terrain that a ground object travels over affects how quickly it can move. Progress over snow for example is twice as slow as over green land. Each object also has its own unique strength so even if you do not succeed in totally destroying an object with your ATF you may weaken it sufficiently to allow one of your own ground forces to finish off the job.

As it turned out the actual coding of the war model was quite straightforward and trouble free (apart from sea forces that regularly headed inland)! The

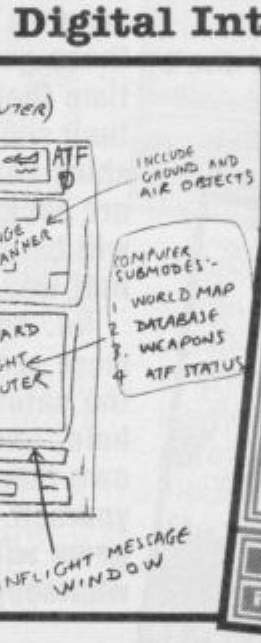


most time-consuming part was the actual testing, with literally hundreds of wars being staged at all levels to make sure the balance was just right.

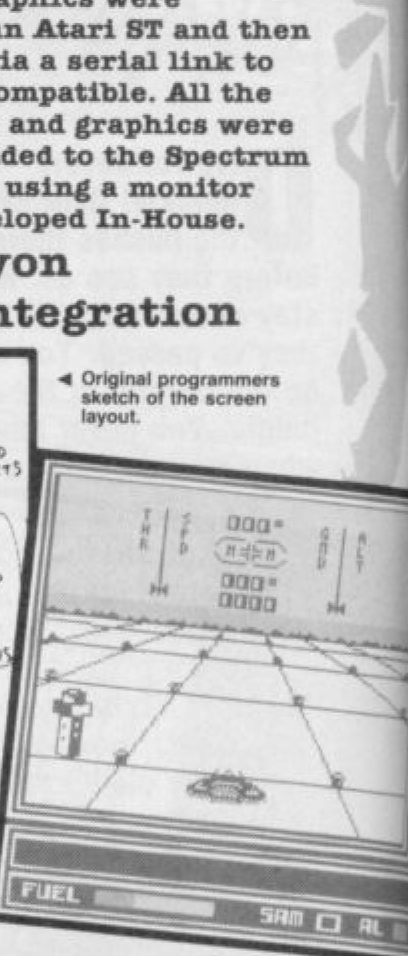
Full use was made of the sound chip present in the 128K Spectrums to add some extra atmosphere to the game, and also a three channel title tune.

All of the program code was written on an IBM AT compatible computer using a powerful macro assembler and relocating linker whilst the graphics were designed on an Atari ST and then downloaded via a serial link to the IBM AT compatible. All the program code and graphics were then downloaded to the Spectrum and debugged using a monitor that was developed In-House.

Ian Benyon
Digital Integration



Original programmers sketch of the screen layout.




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FULL PRICE 20

SINCLAIR user

COMPILED BY GALLUP FOR SINCLAIR USER

1	(1)	**OUTRUN** As close to the original as anyone could expect	US GOLD £8.95		8 STARS
2	NEW!	**PLATOON** Six exciting mini-arcade games – one of Ocean's best	OCEAN £9.95		8 STARS
3	(2)	**MATCH DAY II** A highly accurate football implementation	OCEAN £7.95		7 STARS
4	(3)	**COMBAT SCHOOL** Can Ocean do no wrong? Another corker	OCEAN £7.95		9 STARS
5	NEW!	**GARFIELD** Easily the best cartoon licence ever	THE EDGE £8.95	CLASSIC	10 STARS
6	(7)	**THE MAGNIFICENT 7** Good value compilation of licensed titles	OCEAN £9.95		8 STARS
7	(15)	**GUNSHIP** Highly impressive combat simulation	MICROPROSE £9.95		9 STARS
8	(11)	**ELITE COLLECTION** Reasonable collection of past hits	ELITE £14.95		8 STARS
9	(5)	**SOLID GOLD** Good value package of '87	US GOLD £9.99		8 STARS
10	(12)	**CALIFORNIA GAMES** One of the best sports sims around	EPYX £8.95		8 STARS
11	(14)	**GARY LINEKER'S SOCCER** Reasonable, though unremarkable, strategy sim	GREMLIN £7.99		6 STARS
12	NEW!	**FOOTBALL DIRECTOR** Highly competent football simulation	D&H £8.95		7 STARS
13	(20)	**SUPER HANG ON** An absolutely superb conversion	ELECTRIC DREAMS £9.99	CLASSIC	10 STARS
14	(19)	**WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD** Just as good as the original	ACCESS £8.99		8 STARS
15	(14)	**STAR WARS** Superb conversion of the coin-op	DOMARK £9.95		8 STARS
16	NEW!	**FLYING SHARK** Marvellous conversion, a Classic treat	FIREBIRD £7.95	CLASSIC	10 STARS
17	(17)	**THUNDERCATS** Marvellous graphics, brill sound and fiendish gameplay	ELITE £9.95	CLASSIC	10 STARS
18	(13)	**RENEGADE** Violent, beautifully animated conversion from the coin	IMAGINE £8.95	CLASSIC	10 STARS
19	NEW!	**GRYZOR** Fast slick action – a cracking game	OCEAN £7.95		9 STARS
20	NEW	**RAMPAGE** Coi-op loses much of its appeal down the conversion lines	ACTIVISION £9.99		6 STARS

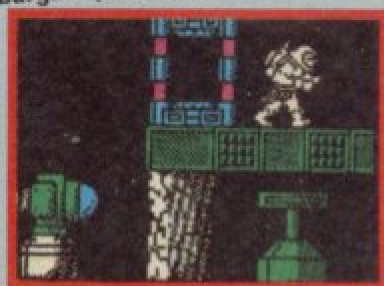
▼ IN THE TOP SLOT: OUTRUN



HOT FULL PRICE

The Russians are coming! The Hunt for Red October, Argus' submarine simulation is lurking beneath the surface of the Top 20.

Also up and coming is Four Smash Hits from Hewson, which contains Exolon, Zynaps, Ranarama and Uridium Plus, a bumper bargain package.



▲ HOT: FOUR SMASH HITS



▲ HOT: RED OCTOBER

1	OUTRUN
2	KIKSTART 2
3	PLATOON
4	COMBAT SCHOOL
5	MAGNIFICENT 7

1	DEAD OR ALIVE
2	VAMPIRE
3	GHOST HUNTERS
4	RIGEL'S REVENGE
5	PLAY IT AGAIN SAM

1	ATV SIMULATOR
2	FRUIT MACHINE SIMULATOR
3	GRAND PRIX SIMULATOR
4	PRO SKI SIMULATOR
5	SOCCER BOSS

CHART COMMENT – FULL PRICE

Outrun remains at the top of the Full Price Chart this month, and there can't be very many people surprised by that. Straight in at No 2 is Ocean's excellent Platoon, which really ought to give Outrun a good chase for its money during the next four weeks. Also new this month, we have Garfield, Flying Shark and Gryzor, three games that SU particularly liked. Otherwise not a great deal of movement this month, many of the old faithfuls like Gunship and Renegade still hanging on in there.

SU CHARTS

HOT BUDGET

Rumbling about on the outskirts of the Top Ten this month we find LA SWAT **from Mastertronic, the game which at least one member of the SU team refused point blank to give house-room to. There's also** 3-D Starfighter **from (cough) Code Masters.**



▲ HOT: 3-D STARFIGHTER



▲ HOT: LA SWAT

BUDGET 10

Pos	Last	Title	Publisher	Price	Rating
1	NEW!	**KIK START 2** Graphically pleasing, great 'just one more go'	CODE MASTERTRONIC	£2.99	8 STARS
2	(2)	**ATV SIMULATOR** Cheap and friendly little simulator, not great but OK	CODE MASTERS	£1.99	6 STAR
3	(3)	**FRUIT MACHINE SIMULATOR** Surprisingly, the whole thing is idiotically addictive	CODE MASTERS	£1.99	8 STARS
4	(1)	**GRAND PRIX SIMULATOR** Superb follow-up to BMX Simulator, reminiscent of Super Sprint	CODE MASTERS	£1.99	8 STARS
5	NEW!	**SUPER STUNT MAN** Lots of colourful action and spiffing gameplay	CODEMASTERS	£1.99	8 STARS
6	(4)	**PRO SKI SIMULATOR** An old idea played in a new way. Definitely masterly code	CODE MASTERS	£1.99	8 STARS
7	(6)	**BACK TO THE FUTURE** Budget re-release, good for 5 or 6 minutes	FIREBIRD	£1.99	4 STARS
8	(5)	**DIZZY** Once you get cracking, you'll never lay it down for a minute	CODE MASTERS	£1.99	9 STARS
9	(10)	**TRAP DOOR** Well liked arcade adventure re-released on budget	ALTERNATIVE	£1.99	8 STARS
10	(9)	**SOCCER BOSS** Really awful rival for Football Manager. Don't even think about it	ALTERNATIVE	£1.99	1 STARS

CHART COMMENT – BUDGET

Cries of jollity this month as finally somebody, anybody, knocks Code Masters off the top slot at last. Yes, it's goodbye Pro-Stunt-Ski-Fruity-Motorbike-Simulator with knobs on, and hello to Kikstart 2, new in at No 1, the sequel to the game that nobody ever remembers appearing on the Spectrum in the first place.

All due credit to Code Masters though, they still hold six of the ten top slots, and that's got to be a good recommendation if ever I saw one.

▼ IN THE TOP SLOT: KIKSTART 2



ER

ARCADE

	US GOLD
	MASTERTRONIC
	OCEAN
	OCEAN
	OCEAN

ADVENTURE

	CODE MASTERS
	CODE MASTERS
	CODE MASTERS
	MASTERTRONIC
	MASTERTRONIC

SIMULATION

	CODE MASTERS
ULATOR	CODE MASTERS
TOR	CODE MASTERS
	CODE MASTERS
	ALTERNATIVE

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“A first rate conversion of a first rate arcade game.”
ZZAP 64 – ZZAP SIZZLER

“Great graphics, good sound, perfect playability, what more could you ask for?” C & V G HIT



“Gauntlet is definitely the most exciting coin-op conversion ever for the 64. For sheer fun and hours of entertainment value this is game the best yet.”
COMMODORE USER – SCREEN STAR



“A super sequel to the much loved dungeon based shoot 'em up. As much of a blast as the first, and about twice as addictive.”
YOUR SINCLAIR



“A corker, fast action and superb gameplay.”
SINCLAIR USER – SINCLAIR USER CLASSIC

“The game's brilliant!”
AMSTRAD ACTION – MASTERGAME

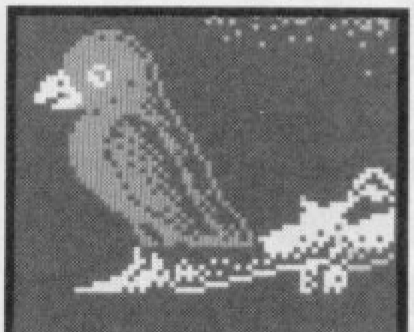
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ENERGY WARRIOR



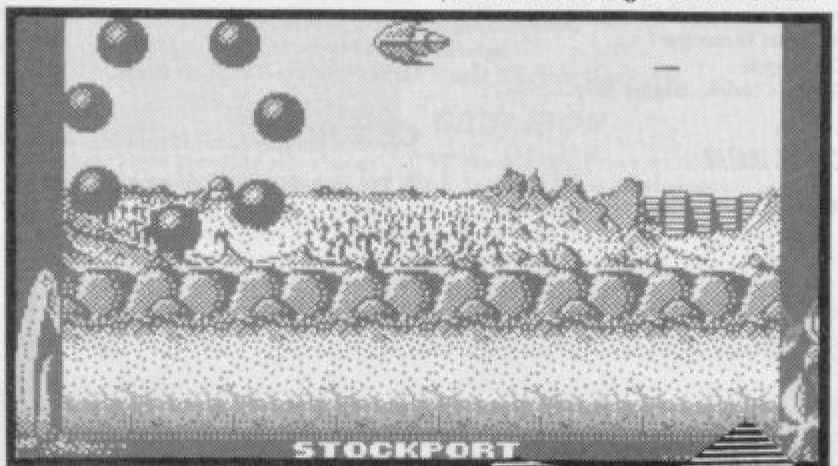
ARCADE REVIEW

The Earth hasn't had much of a run, has it? First the dinosaurs came along, leaving droppings all over the carpet, then the Ice Age came along and froze the whole place up. To top it all, Mike Smith decided to become a DJ, so everyone packed up their stuff and left mother Earth forever. Only a few remain. Known as the rangers. They each guard specific areas of the Earth from things that are hot areas of the Earth.

Here then is **Energy Warrior** first of *Mastertronics'* MADX games – cassettes with a free game on the reverse. **Molecule Man** is the B side here and it's pretty bad. Enough of that.

Yes, you in your little spaceship have to fly above the surface of the planet and eliminate the aliens. Easy, you say, just defending a couple of areas. Yes easy, just defending 30 areas, at once. No sweat for the bear, but what about mortals?

Actually it's not that hard. The challenge is there, but it's not very difficult to have a long game. The aliens come in waves, one wave at a time, and you have to shoot them out with the little gun on the front of your craft. The game is viewed side on, as in **Nemesis**, **Defender**, etc. Controls are just up, down, fire and left/right to turn your ship around.



The graphics are OKish, with some nice details here and there, but it is the scrolling where the game really comes into its own. Parallax starfields have been seen before, but this is something different. Five layers of backdrop all scrolling at different speeds make this scrolling the best I have seen, easily surpassing games like **Uridium**.

There you have it, some good reasons to buy it and one very good reason to buy it. Next time you are out buying budget, give it a try. I like it and I'm beggared if SU is getting it back■

FAXBOX

Well above average budget shooty with excellent parallax scrolling. With a free game, a very good buy

ENERGY WARRIOR
Label: Mastertronic
Author: Binary Design
Price: £1.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Tony Dillon

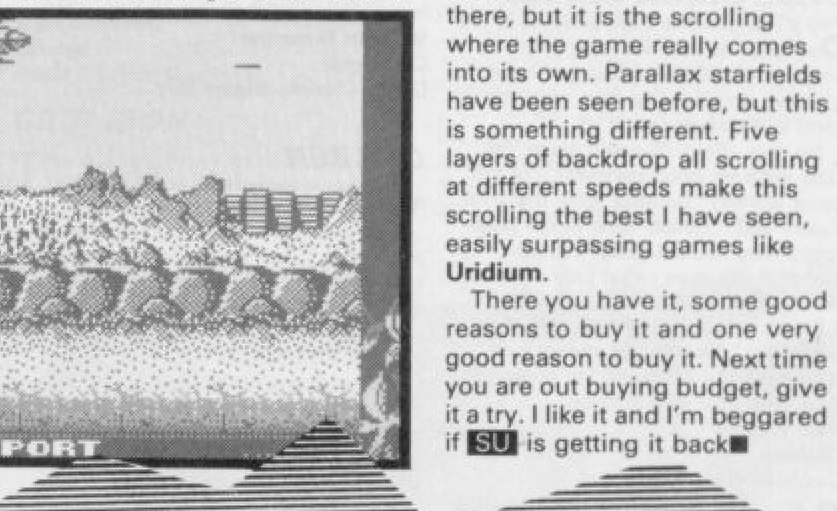
★★★★★★★★★☆ 9

ROLLAROUND

Three of the words I most hate are 'simple but maddeningly addictive'. FOUR of the words I most hate are '<u>graphically</u> simple but maddeningly addictive'. FIVE of the words . . .

Let's start again. Rollaround **is one of those games where graphics ain't worth a spit, but the gameplay is so much fun that you don't care. It's a sort of cross between** Painter, Marble Madness **and** Bobby Bearing, **in that you control a sphere rolling around a number of complex networks of squares. Your aim is to collect the correct number of symbols from each level, indicated at the top of the screen.**

Each of the levels includes nine screens laid out as a three by three grid. Some of the screens consist simply of right-angled pathways, where the worst thing that can happen is that you lose a life by plummeting off the edge. But on the more complex screens, where there can be up to 100 squares, aliens appear and make your life hell. Some will chase after you and turn the square beneath you into a hole, some actually leap over obstacles to get at you, and some sit guarding the squares you want to collect. There are also several types of square. Some change the nature of all the other squares on the level, some turn plain squares into holes (which can be useful for killing aliens), and some stop the clock for a limited time. (Oh yes, forgot to tell you; there's a time limit for each level, and in some cases you'll find the squares collapsing under you).



After each level there's a fruit-machine style bonus game where you hit the fire button as a series of tokens light up. You can get yourself an extra life, extra points, or a big fat zero here.

You can abort a level at the loss of a life if you get stuck, and there are decent sound effects and music to complete a neat little package.

If leaping over the fast-moving aliens, collecting squares and avoiding big holes are things you don't do well in real life, then you won't get far with Rollaround. **For most of us, though, it will provide far more entertainment than anything this simple has any right to do■**

FAXBOX

Graphically basic but enjoyable playable combination of skill and strategy

ROLLAROUND
Label: Mastertronic
Authors: Mr Chip
Price: £1.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: Kemspton

Reviewer: Chris Jenkins

★★★★☆★★★☆☆ 7

IF you reckon we're talking rubbish don't just stand there . . .

Tell us what you think.

Stick your comments on paper, fill in and cut out the coupon below and send it in . . .

And if you don't send us your picture – the sillier the better – we'll have to print a picture of a slug

CALIFORNIA GAMES

So it's as good as **Renegade,** is it? It's as good as **Star Wars,** is it? It's as good as **World Class Leaderboard,** is it? It's as good as **Out Run,** is it? It's as good as **Salamander,** is it?

No, Non, Nein, Nao and Nano. Jim "The not very good reviewer – of this game anyway" Douglas gave this trash 8 stars and, I quote, "One of the best sports sims around. (Ha). 4 great events, 2 iffy ones (what only 2? more like 6). Hurrrummmph)!"

8 stars equals: "Good stuff, well worth the money." No way, go spend it on something like **720°**, like I'm going to do if this letter gets printed!

Paul Jones
Oldham
Game Choice: 720°

Back in the knife drawer with you, Miss Sharp! You're a vicious lot, aren't you? Still, at least you agree with me on 720°, which doesn't make you quite the twonk you initially appear.

OUT RUN

How could you give **Out Run** only eight stars? Are you nuts? This deserves at least a Classic. The speed and graphics are brill, and what other racing game has massive great juggernauts for you to overtake?

I agree that the Speccy version is nowhere near as good as the original coin-op, but what can you expect from the humble Speccy? It has its limitiations.

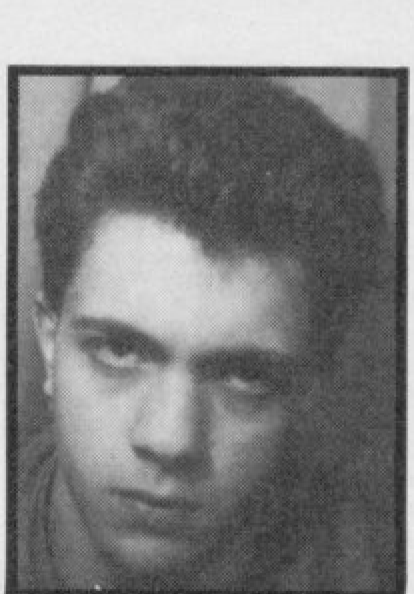
The game is a multi-load, but this actually has some advantages. It lets you get your breath back after each hair-raising stage.

Overall, I think that this is a great game and definitely one of US Gold's best.

William Bremner
Caithness
Game Choice: Buggy Boy

OUT RUN

You gave **Out Run** 8 stars, right? I wouldn't give it 4. It says on the packaging. "Feel the G-Force of a high speed racing car." I didn't feel anything, as a matter of fact it seems quite slow for 298 mph. Also, the car is massive, it's almost as tall as the lorries, and even worse, bigger than the houses that you pass. The only good comment I have to make is about the graphics, they are highly detailed and aren't at all jerky, as in the arcade version.



BLAME CORNER
JIM DOUGLAS

£8.99 is a bit much for this relatively poor quality game, £6.99 would be better.

Joseph Brown
Gloucester
Game Choice: The Last Ninja.

OUT RUN

Not 24 hours ago, before writing this letter, I bought **Out Run,** and WOW! It's so hot it melted my recorder. But why did it get 8 stars? It should have been a Classic, no, change that to a Mega Out of This World Mine's a Big Mac with Fries Classic (Phew)!

The mega music ought to get to the top of the charts even Madonna likes it, she's a great friend of mine (what a dreamer). Jim Douglas should take a hike, and get someone else to review the Classics. If another decision like this is made, Shuk and Dude are gonna know your address.

Seriously, you should buy it, 'cos it's FABRILLIANT.

By the way, the name's mine, but the mug shot isn't, if it was I'd hardly be writing this letter for a lousy tenner for a computer game, would I?

James Dean
Peterborough
Game Choice: Combat School

OUT RUN

Send Jim Douglas to the gallows! I'm referring to his review of **Out Run.** 8 stars out of 10? This c**p doesn't deserve one star. When driving along you can hardly see the lines of the road, and end up missing the bends. Even worse is when you crash and start spinning about.

Why did US Gold try and tackle such an ominous task? Why couldn't they just leave us with fond memories of the fabby coin-oip? (And by the way, Kamikaze Bear rooles).

Simon Fisher
Dunbartonshire
Game Choice: 720°

Jim says: My, my. Touchy, aren't we? Just take a second and think about what sort of things are feasible on the Spectrum. Then think about what sort of job Probe & USG did, all-things-considered. Then go and put your head under a pneumatic hammer.



IMPORTANT NOTICE
SU CUTS WRITE STUFF PAYMENTS SHOCK

It's true, from now on all Write Stuff entries will be paid only five pounds instead of ten. "Meanies" you cry. Not so, nor will we spend the money we save on holidays in exotic climes. We did it for you. (Cries of "Lies" "Cheats")

The point is we were getting so many Write Stuff entries the chance of any particular person ever getting their opinion printed was getting about one in a hundred. By cutting the cash to a (still generous) fiver we hope to separate those who have a real opinion to express from the plain greedy and give the former more chance to get printed. Hope you agree.

BOSCONIAN

OK, so it was reviewed in the November issue and isn't the most interesting thing around, but it's still worth a look. I parted with the 'hard-earned' a few weeks ago and the game has provided hours of mega joy on my puny 48K (if I say 'mega' here it seems to improve my chances of a tenner).

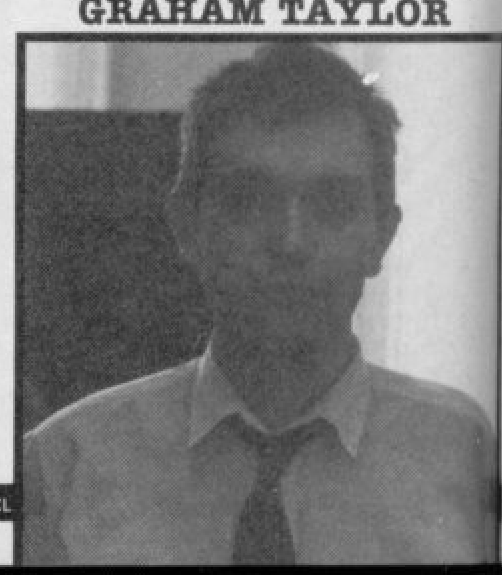
Graphics are sufficient, but scrolling is ultra smooth. The mines scattered here and there are great for dodging the formation attacks. I have to say that seven stars was a little low, so if you have a couple of quid around, buy this game! All the rubbish in this letter doesn't matter, the game is just truly addictive (I didn't mention the puny bullets).

Tomas Kelly
Dublin
Game Choice: Garfield

RENEGADE

Oh no, not another **Renegade** worshipper I hear you cry! How did you guess? I just can't help it, I lurrv that cool **Renegade** sprite, kicking people in the goolies and throwing 'em off ledges.

BLAME CORNER
GRAHAM TAYLOR



The WRITE STUFF?!

COMBAT SCHOOL

Sinclair User, how could you! How could you not have given **Combat School** a Classic? It's the most mega, fab, hip, crucial, cool and totally spondicious game in the world. OK, you gave it 9 stars, when it was worth at least 18. Only Mike Lamb and his gang could have come up with a game like this. I mean, the graphics, the colour, the whole is just totally brilliant.

Readers, if you have not bought this game, you're off your trolleys.

Stephen Williams
Manchester
Good Choice: Thundercats

COMBAT SCHOOL

What a game – this is the greatest. I think the main attraction is the fact that the 8 events, including arm-wrestling and pull-ups, are all quite different. You might say that with 3 shooting events this can't be so. Wrong! Each one is done differently to give a very playable and addictive game, as each time you play you try to improve your scores and times.

BLAME CORNER TONY DILLON



Altogether, I can truthfully say it is as good, if not better than the arcade original. Buy this game now, before you regret it. Well done Ocean!

Dean Martyn Fenner
Grimsby
South Humberside
Game Choice: Garfield

KIKSTART 2

Kikstart is great, absolutely brill! Take the ramps, jump the phone boxes, dodge the fires and ride the ski jumps, but remember, not too fast.

Just in case you get too good at the game, there is a built-in course designer with which you can redesign any of the 24 courses and load to or from tape. The obstacles range from six foot high brick ramps to a couple of inches of mud that slows you right down. Since I got this game home I haven't turned it off yet! I admit that graphics-wise it's only OK, but the gameplay makes up for all that. This game should get nine stars if not a Classic – and all this at budget price!

Daniel Ashton
London
Game Choice: Garfield

GRID IRON

This is a bad game warning. **Grid Iron** has got to be the worst game I have seen on any Speccy. The graphics are ultra-mega tripe, and there isn't any sound apart from the odd beep.

It ought to get the award for the most-ultra-super-dooper-mega-cool-king-of-the-cheapo-nasty-games-of-the-year!

Stuart Minshull
Crewe
Game Choice: Thundercats

DIZZY

I totally agree with your review of **Dizzy**, it's a real bargain at £1.99, better than any full priced game now out. The colour is just so sooooooooooooper dooper! The sound is really good with a good tune at the beginning, not to mention good in-game tunes. And since I first played it, I've found it so addictive, I can't find anything nasty to say about it at all. It should be in YOUR collection of game.

(By the way, I think your magazine is the best).

Yusuf Gulliver
Norwich
Game Choice: Rolling Thunder

MUM!

THE HORRIBLE TRUTH – WHAT SU READERS REALLY LOOK LIKE!



Now say sorry to Ocean, SU. 8 stars, tut tut. The only way to stop us complaining is to write another review and give **Renegade** 10 stars and a Classic!

Darren Paul
Cheltenham
Game Choice: Out Run

GARFIELD

What a game! A pure treat for any **Garfield** fan. As soon as I saw your review I went straight to Boots and handed over a tenner. As soon as I got home I went straight to my bedroom and loaded it.

And wow! Brilliant graphics and expression by the characters. It might get tedious in places, but once you work out what an object is, and what it does, you're away again. Everyone give this game an SU Classic. Graham Taylor must be as blind as a bat! The sprites, the backgrounds and everything else is brill!

Still, it could have been worse, I guess Tamara could have reviewed it – go out and buy this superb game, and by the way, it deserved the Classic that you gave it. Well done SU.

Martin Adams
Fareham
Hants
Game Choice: Flying Shark.

GARFIELD

I knew it! Graham Taylor is mad. **Garfield** a Classic? Pah! Humbug! What rubbish. After spending £8.95 on **Garfield**, loading it up and playing one game I was swooning from the shock. The graphics aren't bad, but the gameplay is totally pathetic. After 50 goes I still hadn't got anywhere.

Don't worry SU, I'll buy your mag even if some of your staff are a bit potty.

Robin A Clark
Peterborough
Game Choice: Rolling Thunder

● After 50 goes you still hadn't got anywhere and you think it's the gameplay that is up the creek . . . me I think you probably need a cheat Poke urgently . . .

Every so often – well very often actually – you write to tell us that we know nothing about anything and insist that some program we trashed is actually the best game ever. Conversely you blast us for saying something is great that you absolutely loath and detest.

Enough is enough. We can't take any more, if you think you're as clever you write the damn magazine. We mean it!

Every month we'll devote a page to a selection of your opinions on the latest software. Don't get mad – write the review you think the game should have received and we (subject only to space) will print it.

Now, aside from seeing your work in print we will send you a crisp £5 note – or cheque – to put towards the software title of your choice – tell us what you plan to spend the money on if your review is printed.

One special request: we want to know what you look like so send us a picture. Any old picture will do – you at home, in Ibiza, in the garden, even making silly faces in photobooths, we don't care.

So get cracking – write your reviews and send them together with the completed coupon below.

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Maximum 150 words. No swearing, libel or illegibility and come out of the corner fighting. Don't beat around the bush – tell us straight what you think. Send your review (of any recent game) plus your picture and fill in the coupon. Send the lot to The Write Stuff, Sinclair User, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

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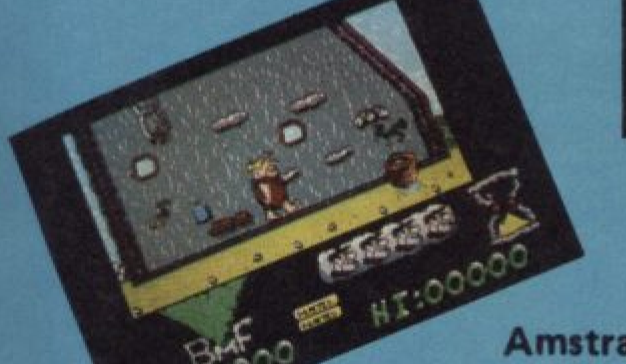
PRESENTS

THE FLINTSTONES

Bowl or Bust! Fred and Barney want to go bowling but Wilma has other ideas ...... and guess who's left holding the baby? Join The Flintstones in this officially licensed arcade adventure based on the famous Hanna Barbera cartoon characters.









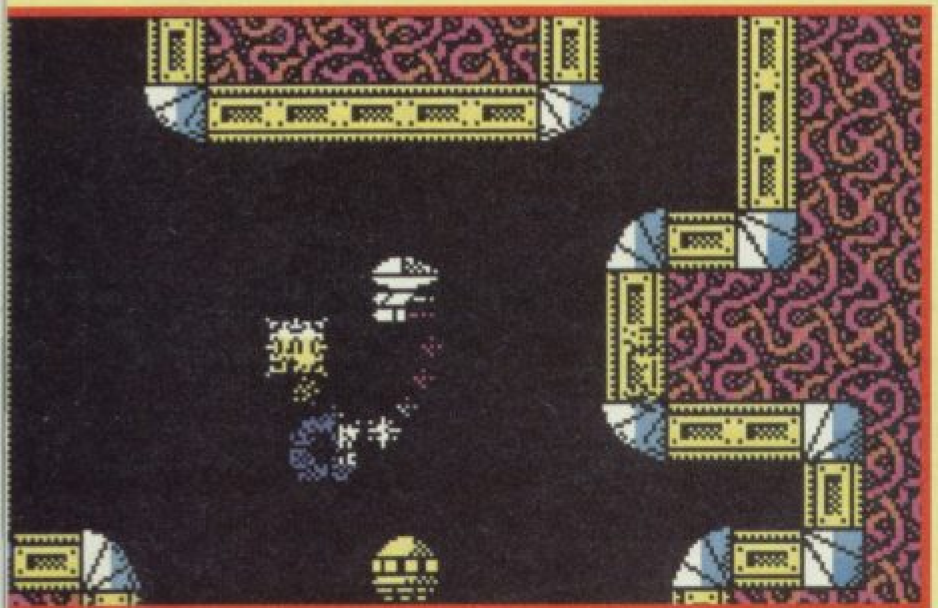
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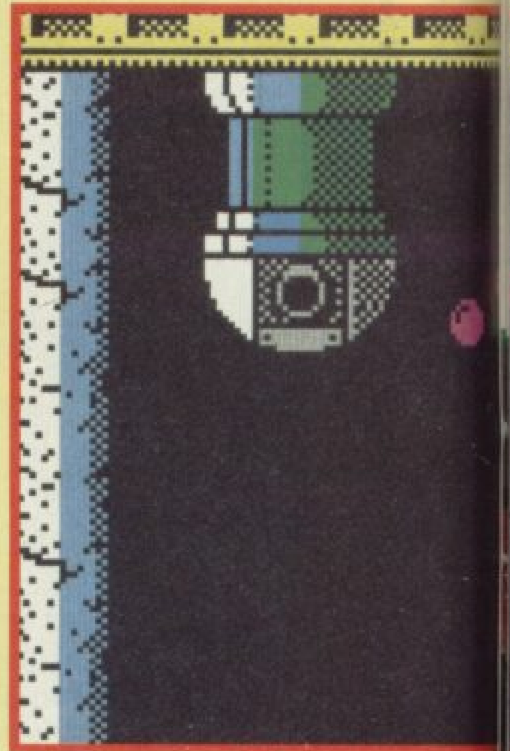
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PROGRAMMERS
RAFFAELE CECCO is the programmer of **Cybernoid.** He hurtled to fame with **Exolon** and this is his second game. He is working on a game, which, he ways, "will be something completely different," (Gasp).



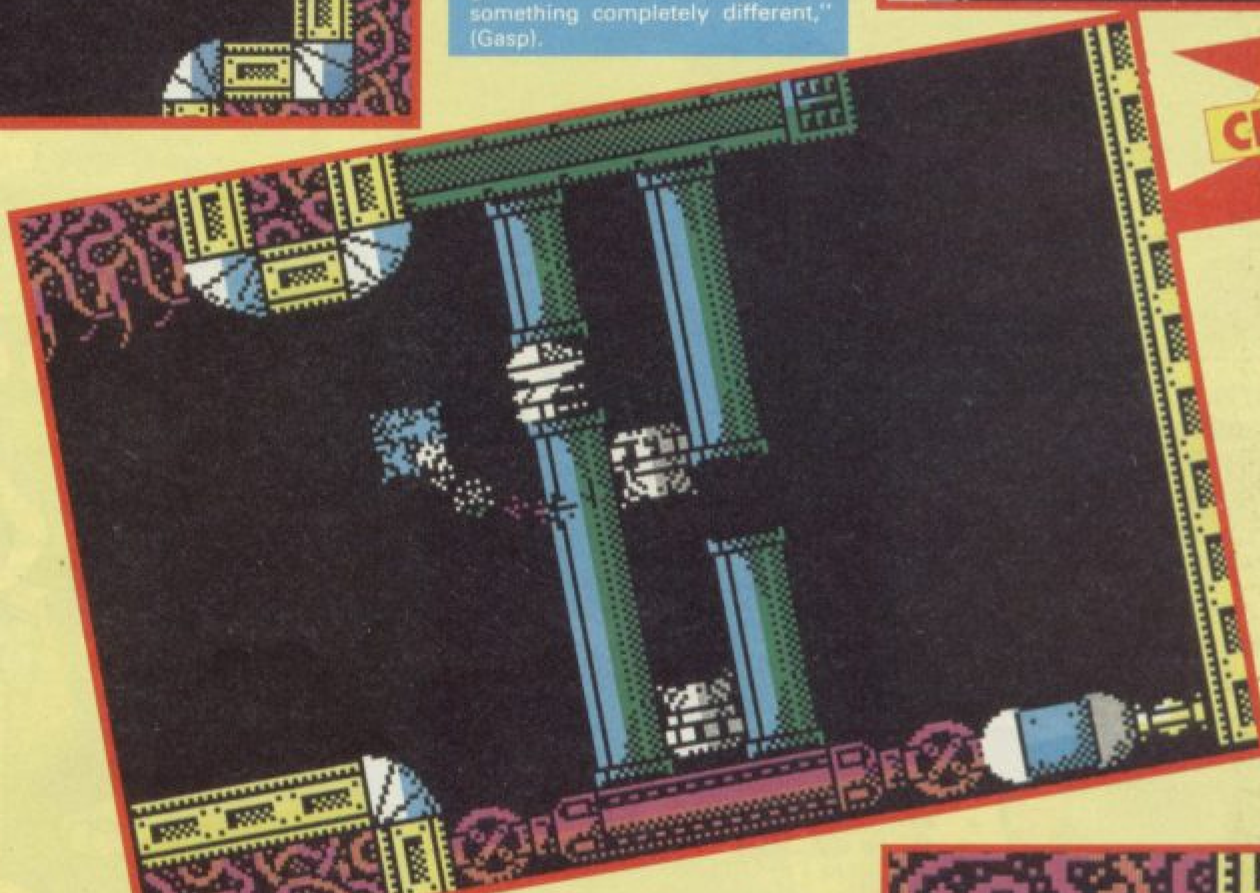
OK admit it. **Exolon** was the best game of 1987. It had better gameplay, bigger graphics and more colour with less colour-clash than any of the competition.

Cybernoid is **Exolon II.** Plotwise it's maybe marginally less original but it takes the brilliant graphics of **Exolon** a stage or two forward and puts them in a flip screen space shoot-em-up of astoundingly destructive proportions.

Cybernoid is a fighting machine – an ultra powerful spaceship just itching to take out hoards and hoards of wibbly alien blobby things. Why kill them? What's the plot? Who cares? Let's just assume they jumped ahead of you in the bus queue or something.

Cybernoid grows in firepower as gameplay progresses. As you survive you discover, dumped in odd corners of the screen, some of the most truly spectacular and destructive weaponry yet seen in a computer game. Things start well with an awesome electromace which swings around your spacecraft leaving a train of sparks behind it. The explosions in this game are better than **Exolon** as things smash into a thousand multicoloured pieces.

There is more. Aliens come in dozens of different guises.

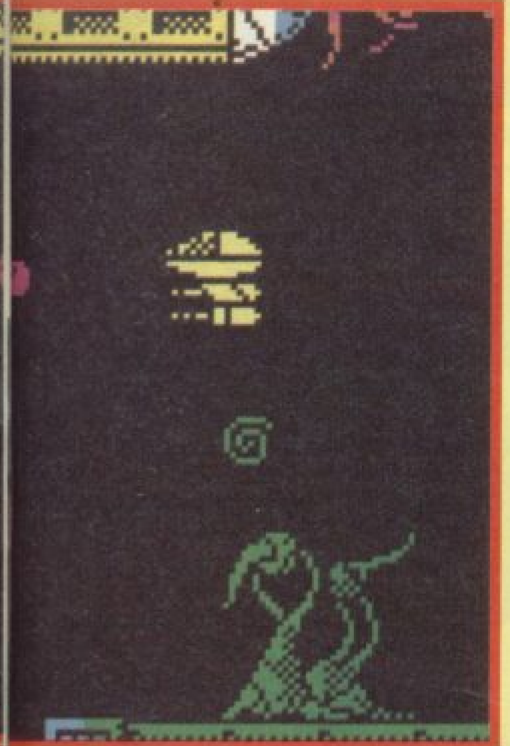






CYBERNOID: THE WEAPONRY

Bombs – Good for the big installations. Can be guided
Impact mines – Plonk these down to trap the dumber enemies
Shield – You become invincible – for a while
Bounce Bomb – Whizz all around the screen. Completely impossible to control, but awesome to watch!
Seeker – Tracks down bad guys



HINTS AND TIPS

- The mace is on the second screen. Try to blast the installation and then grab it rather than the other way around because you might get killed!
- On the first right to left screen stay low to grab the goodies and then start firing. And don't stop
- When you reach the first three channel obstacle be careful to position yourself very carefully – one pixel out of place and, Wammo!
- Watch out for the gun emplacements – some are slightly hidden

Some are tiny and can be easily taken out with standard lasers, others are gigantic monstrosities – particularly deadly are the bizarre things which look like wasps' nests and throw out deadly bouncing bombs.

Parts of the game remind me of the old **Caverns of Mars** – it isn't just blasting things, sometimes to get further into the game you need to time your way past some of the most fiendish obstacles known to arcadekind – tiny channelways needing precision steering and split-second timing.

For the wimpish there is a shield option which will get you pretty safely through the early screens, but there is a problem – it runs out. If you use it up in the early stages – well you're going to be pretty stuck when the going starts to get really tough aren't you?



It's a real player's game this – you can start to develop strategies for different obstacles. Certain kinds of flying bomb follow specific patterns and no obstacle is impassable – just very, very difficult indeed. Someone somewhere is going to solve it in about two hours but the average blasthead should get days and days of challenge.

Game of the yar so far? You bet. It has everything **Exolon** does but it's harder and the graphics are probably even better. **Cybernoid** is also certainly the most completely destructive game I've ever seen.

I think all of that adds up to a pretty strong recommendation don't you? The best flip screen shoot-em-up ever seen on the Spectrum. A worthy successor to **Exolon**■

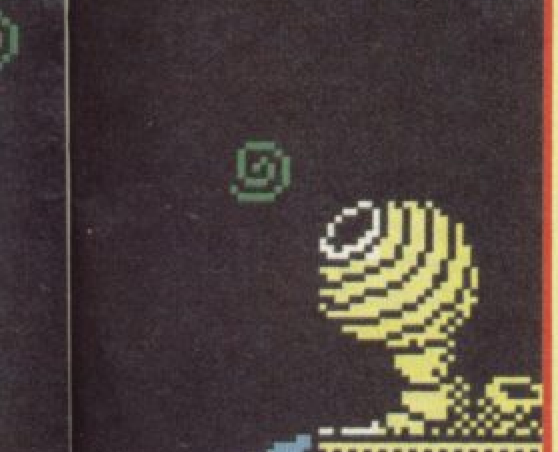
FAXBOX

Everything Exolon had and more. A worthy successor

CYBERNOID
Label: Hewson
Author: Raffaele Cecco
Price: £7.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Graham Taylor

★★★★★ ★★★★★ 10



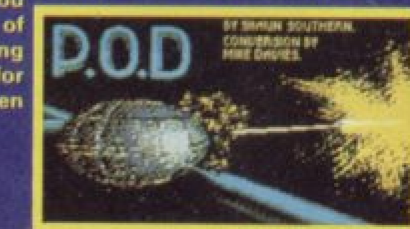
TWILIGHT ZONE

PROOF OF DESTRUCTION

ARCADE Label: **Mastertronics** Author: **Icon Design** Price: **£1.99** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **various** Reviewer: **Tony Dillon**

Jeff Minter at his best expect its not Minter's doing

Pod is a fast moving, colourful, difficult, exciting shoot 'em up. There, Ive finished my review. Well, what more can I say? That's what the blurb says. I can't harp on about alien rulers wanting to rule this, that or the other, or your endless quest of the orb of whatever. Dum de dum. I'm getting paid for this you know. Oh, all right, I'll tell you a bit more. Pod **is, in a word, psychedelic, (very) is all the Minter hallmarks but it isn't. The background is the long scrolling mass of colours. You fly a little pod around a grid, and nasties quickly fly down from the top very smoothly. You move very quickly and the rain of fire is astounding. Looks nothing much but well worth digging out for a couple of hours entertaining alien blasting.**



★★★★☆ ★★★☆☆ 7

PARK PATROL

ARCADE Label: **Firebird** Price: **£1.99** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **none** Reviewer: **Jim Douglas**

Hotch potch of a few fairly dull ideas. Awful graphics Harmless hokum

Park Patrol **looks like it could be a re-working of the age-old classic,** Frogger, **the game where you've got to make your way across a river dodging logs and other water-bound obstacles. Which means it's a little disappointing to discover that it's about being a ranger in a nature park and collecting litter. Adversaries you will encounter include swimmers, ants, snakes and logs. Very threatening. Acceptable gameplay is marred by shocking graphics and an initial idea so boring I'd rather listen to my grandmother explaining how to make strawberry jam. Two pounds could be spent in far better ways, though I conceded this isn't actually the epitome of dreadfulness. Not quite■**



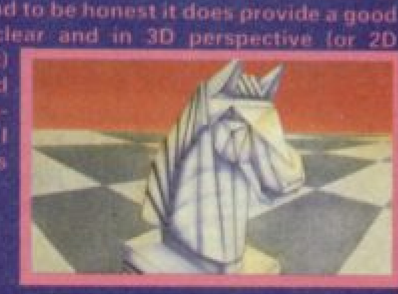
★★☆☆☆ ★★☆☆☆ 4

COLOSSUS 4 CHESS

STRATEGY Label: **CDS Software** Author: **M. Bryant** Price: **£14.99** Memory: **128k (+3 only)** Joystick: **various** Reviewer: **Tony 'Grandmaster' Dillonoschoff**

Average chess game with a fair level of playability, but there are better ones on the market

Colossus 4 Chess **brings a lot of promise with it. It heralds itself as being the greatest 8 bit chess program available, but I feel I have to disagree. The old** PSION Sinclair Chess **program was pretty fab but I feel that** PSI Chess **is the best 8 bit chess game around.** Colossus Chess **has all the features of most of the chess programs about. It boasts 16 levels, which is quite impressive, and to be honest it does provide a good challenge. The screen layout is clear and in 3D perspective (or 2D newspaper style if you want) though still lacks the 'cleaness' and finish of some other programs. Altogether, a very good attempt, but I can't see sales booming, not at this price anyway■**



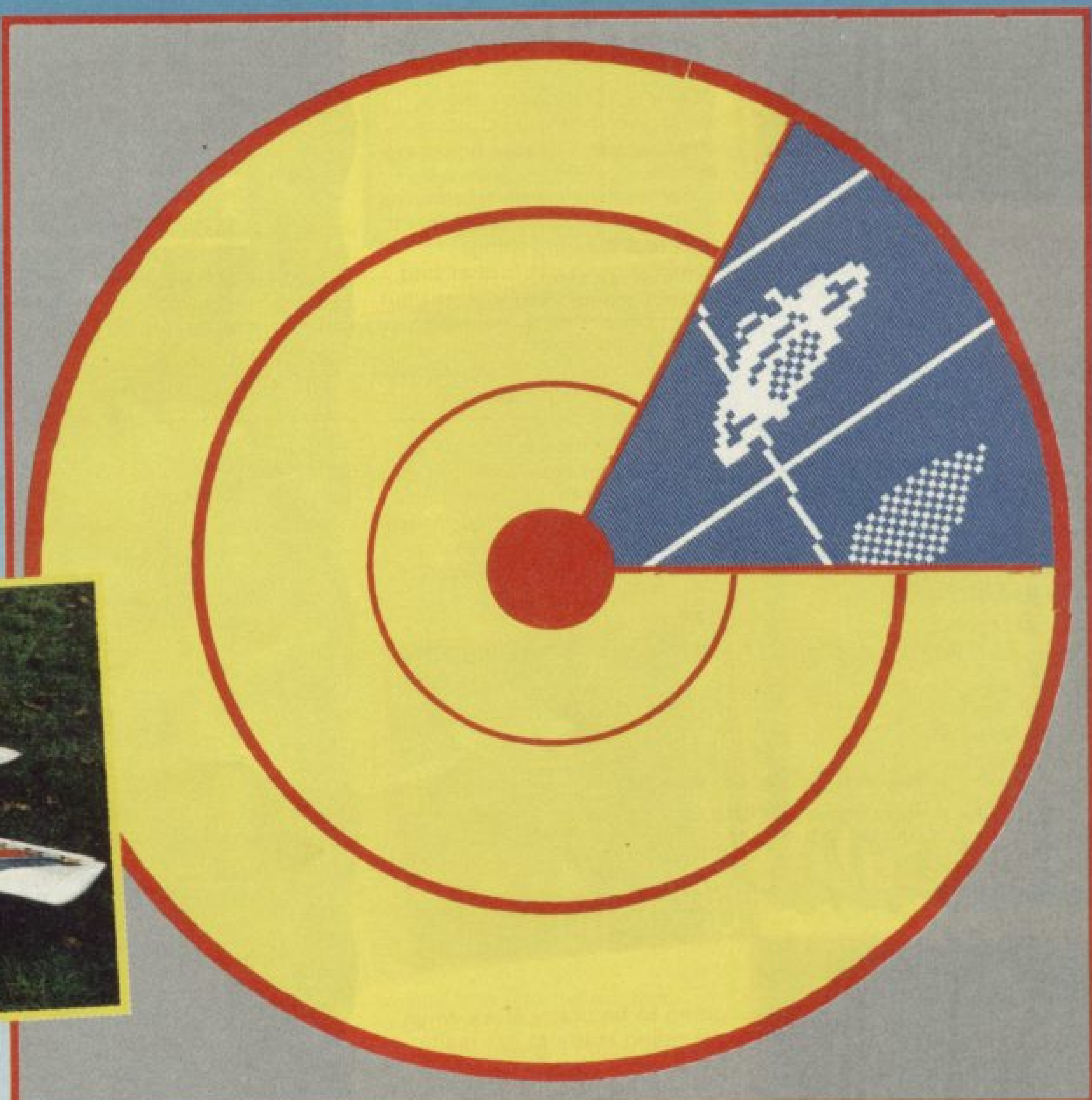
★★★★☆ ★★★☆☆ 7

COMPETITION

Mayday! Mayday! Mayday!

Well, OK, so it's April, but we just couldn't wait to give you the chance to enter another in our series of Absolutely Unbelievable Flying Things Competitions.

OK. Same routine as last month: you look at the pictures and say "Who on Earth are they trying to kid? There's no way they can possibly give away something as fantastic as this!" and then we spend the rest of the page trying to convince you that yes you really really could get your mitts on such a fantastic prize. I realise it's tough,





but I'll have a go anyway.

As I'm sure you remember, we loved *Digital Integration's* **ATF** to bits (see last issue) and we thought it would be rather wonderful if we were to get together and offer you a competition to make you fall off your seat.

As you recall, **ATF** is a seriously addictive flying-over-the-landscape sort of game, hence a flying prize to accompany the compo.

If you were tempted by the helicopter last month, this one will make your knees tremble.

The Questions:

1) Some planes can fly backwards. True or False?
2) Who was the first person to fly the Channel?
A] Orville Wright B] Blériot C] Sir F. Laker
3) What's the Russian national airline called?
A] Gorbo B] Aeroflot C] The Trans-Siberian Shuttle
Send your entry to: Another Big Flying Thing, Sinclair User, 14 Holkham Road, Orton, Peterborough, P62 0UF

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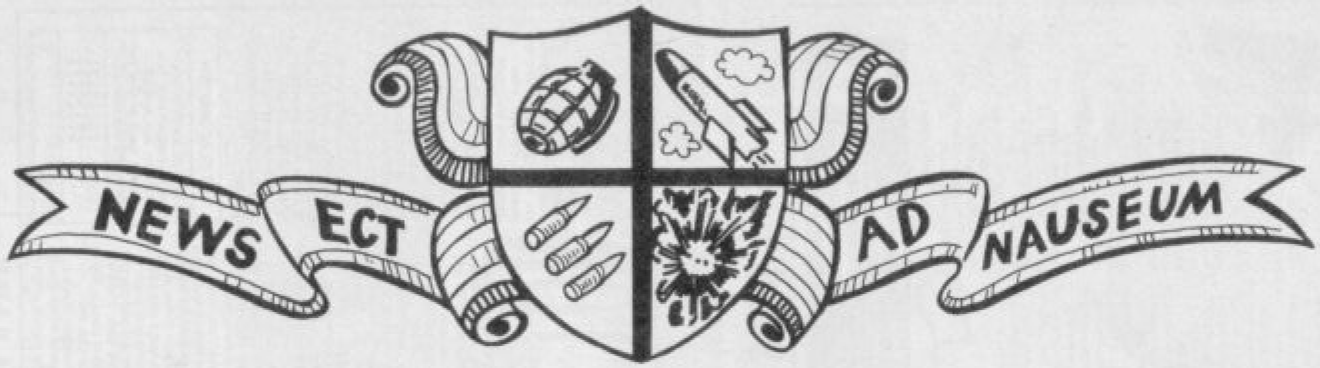
10 2nd Prizes: *Copy of* **ATF**

150 3rd Prizes: *Assorted ATF,* *Night Gunner and other posters*

For the extremely minimal mental strain involved in answering the questions below, you stand a chance of being able to scare the living daylights out of the neighbours' cat and induce heart failure in those bloody sparrows that are always at your milk.

The plane comes in kit form, but it's easy as forgetting to lift your undercarriage to put together.







TRUE STORIES

THEY REALLY ARE TRUE HONEST NO JOKE **PRICE: £37.87**

ACTIVISION LICENSED TO KILL OFF OPPOSITION

by a special correspondent

There was a time, not so long ago, when many people thought that Activision, so successful in the States, was going to become something of a failure in Britain. More recently however, the company has pulled up its collective socks, and is now showing not only a very healthy profit, but also a distinct improvement in the quality of its games.

Last month we saw **Predator**, and heard of **Karnov**, the tubby fire-breathing Russian, and now Activision announces that it has acquired **After Burner** licence.

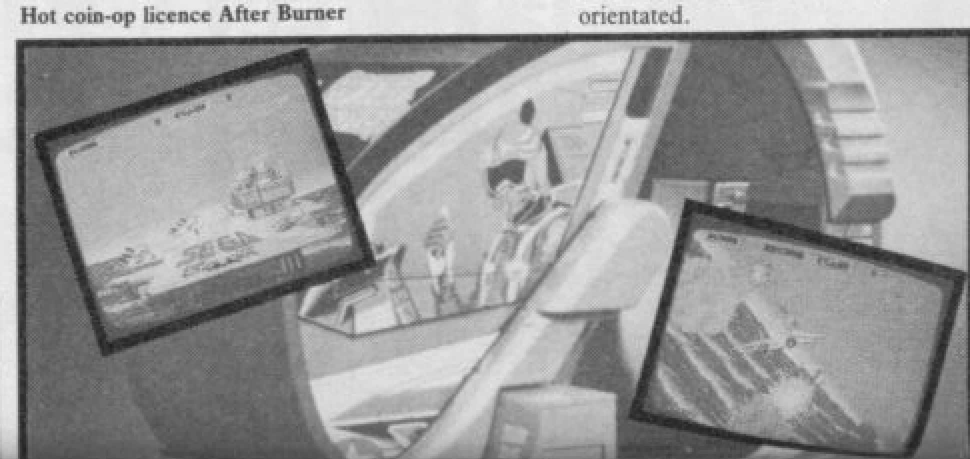
After Burner is one of the most spectacular of the recent coin-ops, primarily because it usually comes contained within an hydraulically-operated cabinet that throws the player from side to side as the plane on-screen pitches and rolls. Include the wonderfully large, detailed and very solid graphics, and you have a coin-op that is going to be distinctly difficult to convert to an 8-bit machine.

Activision, however, isn't daunted, since it has, apparently, found a new way to overcome the obvious difficulties. No programming team has yet been assigned to the project, but hopes are running high for a number one at Christmas, courtesy of **After Burner**.

Alongside the news of this licence, Activision has also announced the acquisition of the rights to **R-Type**, a hugely popular space-type blast which features some truly stunning scenery and suitably enormous monsters to round off each level.

There are also two more licences to look forward to, both from Sega. **SDI** (Strategic Defence Initiative) is a 'Star Wars' type game, and **Time Scanner** is believe it or not, Pinball orientated.

Hot coin-op licence After Burner



LEE PLACES BET ON YETI SEARCH

The Kamikaze Bear Headlines

Ten'Shun!!!

OK, here goes April accordin' to the bear. Only it's not. I'm writin' this in February, to be published in March, cover date April. Whadda ya people doin'????? Kamikaze's gettin' confused!!! SORT IT OUT! (Grrr).

This month we had the Olympics from Canada. Whatta dull place. And whatta dull set of sports! Who's this twit Edwards, huh? Eddie 'Sparrow' Edwards. Couldn't punch his way out of a wet paper bag.

An' what is this thing called



ON YETI SEARCH

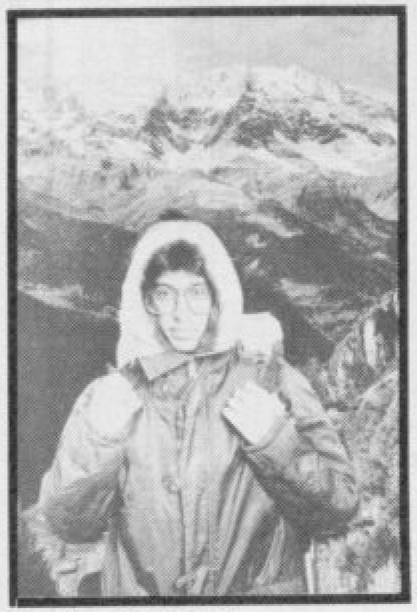
by our Himalayan editor

Here we see Destiny Software boss, Francis Lee, sressed in a highly fetching parka, against a highly false Himalayan background.

The cause of this publicity shot is, of course, **Yeti**, one of Destiny's first releases, reviewed elsewhere in this issue. The release of **Yeti** coincides conveniently with the expedition led by the famous mountaineer, Chris Bonnington to find the yeti and prove its existence. And here we have the perfect excuse for a very impressive publicity campaign.

Francis Lee has placed a bet at the ridiculous odds of 250-1 that the yeti will be found this time. Should he be correct, he stands to win something in the region of £30,000. Not that he wants to keep the money for himself. Whoever sends Francis the best description of a yeti will take away the 30K.

Of course, should the yeti not be found, there won't really be much of a prize to collect, and anyone who's bothered to enter this competition will really have been wasting their time. Still, here's hoping.



Francis wraps up warm

HORROR SCENES AS SU PRICE RISES

Staff reporter

Those of you who are regular readers of this noble periodical will no doubt have noticed that the cover price has now been raised to £1.50.

We know that there are some people who have complained because they believe that their free game tape was not free.

In fact, at the last moment, we added all sorts of extras to the tape, which we felt were well worth the extra 50p. Due to an oversight, this was not explained in the last issue. We apologise if anyone was disappointed last month.

JIM (NOT OURS) FIXES IT FOR SUPERMARKET GAME

by our media editor

It seems that these days the best way to get your game published is by writing to *Jim'll Fix It*.

Andrew Collett wrote a game called **Super Trolley**, and thought that dear ol' Jim would be able to do the necessary wheeling and dealing to get him a contract with a software house. And Jim did it, persuading Mastertronic that they really wanted Andrew's game as one of their own.

All about stacking shelves, pleasing customers and becoming manager/ess of the supermarket, **Super Trolley** will soon be released through Mastertronic.

Andrew Collett will appear on *Jim'll Fix It* on March 12, and here's a picture of **Super Trolley's** inlay card.



Jim fixes Super Trolley

MOUSE TRAPPED IN KEMPSTON TOOLKIT



Give your Spectrum that sophisticated look

by our hardware reporter

Anyone who wants to glamorise their Spectrum a little bit will be pleased to hear that Kempston has launched a package containing a mouse and toolkit software.

The toolkit provides a Wimp system – windows, icons, menus and pointers – all using machine code routines designed to run from Basic. So Spectrum owners who want to be ST owners when they grow up can fantasise a little now, thanks to Kempston.

The mouse and toolkit together cost £49.95, inclusive of VAT, and are compatible for all Spectrums, from the 48K to the +3.

There is a special version available for Rockfort Disciple owners, and any existing mouse owners can buy just the toolkit at £9.95, inclusive of VAT.

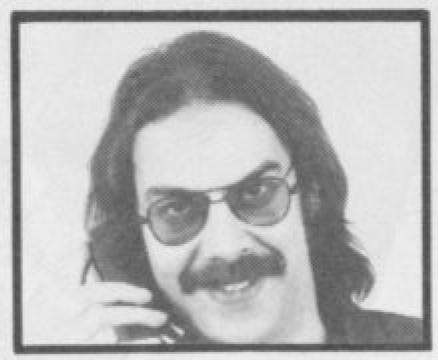
Further information can be gained from Kempston, by writing to 22 Linford Forum, Rockingham Drive, Linford Wood, Milton Keynes MK14 6LY.

MUSIC ACE

by an American correspondent

All those with a passion for Rod Hubbard soundtracks should start getting heavily into Electronic Arts' games.

The previously freelance Hubbard has now joined EA full time and will be working for the company from its American Headquarters in San Mateo, California. Well known for his work on the soundtracks of **Monty on the Run** and **Knucklebusters**, Hubbard most recently worked for EA on **Skate or Die.** He liked it so much, he joined the company.



the loooeuge or somethin'? Grown men lyin' on tin trays, wearin' rubber body bags an' slidin' down an icy slope? Kids stuff! Wouldn't catch Kamikaze doin' that. Bah. Grr.

But I liked the ski-ing, 'specially the slalom, all that weavin' in and out of things. Reminded me of chasing through the jungle when I was in 'Nam. An' they really hurt themselves when they fall over.

Talkin' of hurting yourself, watch out for that guy Jimmy D. He's gotta new car, and he's dangerous on the roads. You see him coming towards ya, get the hell outta there!

There's all sorts of strange things goin' on industry-wise, and Kamikaze's damn sure he don't like 'em! There's all this fuss goin' on about a new software house called Destiny. Now Kami doesn't mind the people doin' their job. But what's all this fuss about the Yeti? Great hairy poof, hidin' away up in the mountains so no one can see him. Doesn't he like attenshun an' fame? Doesn't he want to fight for his country? Grr.

Television's baad noos at the moment. I got home the other day after a night on manoeuvres, an' turned on the telly to see some crud called Goin' Live! WHO IS THIS GOPHER? I'd make sanwiches outta him! An' that girlie Philip Schofield, how dare he work with that Sarah Green? Kamikaze likes her, she's too good for the likes of him. Even if she does do coffee ads and pretend to be Groucho Marx. At least Kami thinks it's Groucho Marx ..... Grrrr.



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FIRE

It's funny, isn't it, how the most cheesy storyline can be constructed around such a fantastic game?

Take Firefly, for example. It's probably got the most enduring gameplay to be found in any game around this month, and the graphics are just great, but the storyline would be enough to make you pass out through sheer disinterest and sense of déjà vu. The world is under threat from alien blobs and it's up to you to quash the empire-build intentions of the little critters.

Heard it all before? Too bloody right, but hang on, you almost certainly haven't played anything with quite as many different elements.

Special FX, which is *Ocean's* hot new coding team, has gone to incredible lengths to include – almost entirely successfully – strategic, arcade and luck-of-the-draw elements among others.

The game is easy to play but complicated to explain. Here goes: pay attention. The aliens are building up a huge network of girders and platforms throughout the whole solar system. The more they manage to build, the closer they are to victory.

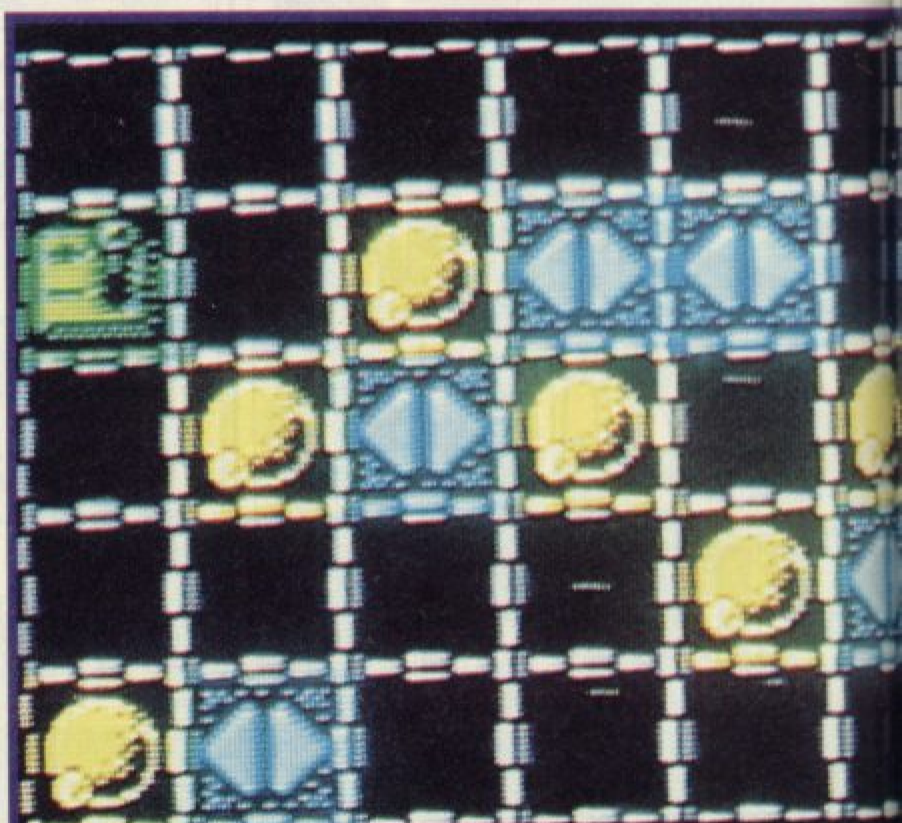
By guiding your Firefly icon (yours is the good ship Firefly) over a grid of squares, you can select which sector of the solar system to attack first. You can only attack the sector adjacent to a 'dead' area – ie, one that you've cleared already. To start off, you have a row of dead areas down the left hand side of the grid.

Once you zap yourself down to the sector, the readout in the bottom of the screen will pop up a schematic representation of the whole sector, with the maze layout – for each sector is essentially a maze – and various important things marked. There are three important things on this map: Teleports, Energy Points and You. Large boulders are indicated too, but as far as I could tell, they're of absolutely no consequence whatsoever.

Teleports beam you about the sector. Once you enter one (you fly over it and wait hopefully) the screen changes to show your ship and a circle of alternate red and blue squares. Your ship spins around in the centre, and the square at which the nose of the craft is pointing is highlighted.

HINTS AND TIPS:

- *Use those teleports! They don't cost any fuel*
- *Shoot away like mad, you have infinite firepower*
- *Leave all the heavily defended sectors alone till last*
- *On the in-between sections, take your time and you'll be able to hit the correct switch every time*
- *When you start a sector, pause the game and work out the quickest route around the maze. Don't waste time*
- *Some of the things flying around are very useful. Try flying into things, and they may well save your life instead of taking it*
- *Don't forget that if you go off the bottom of a sector, you'll come out at the top. . .*





FAXBOX

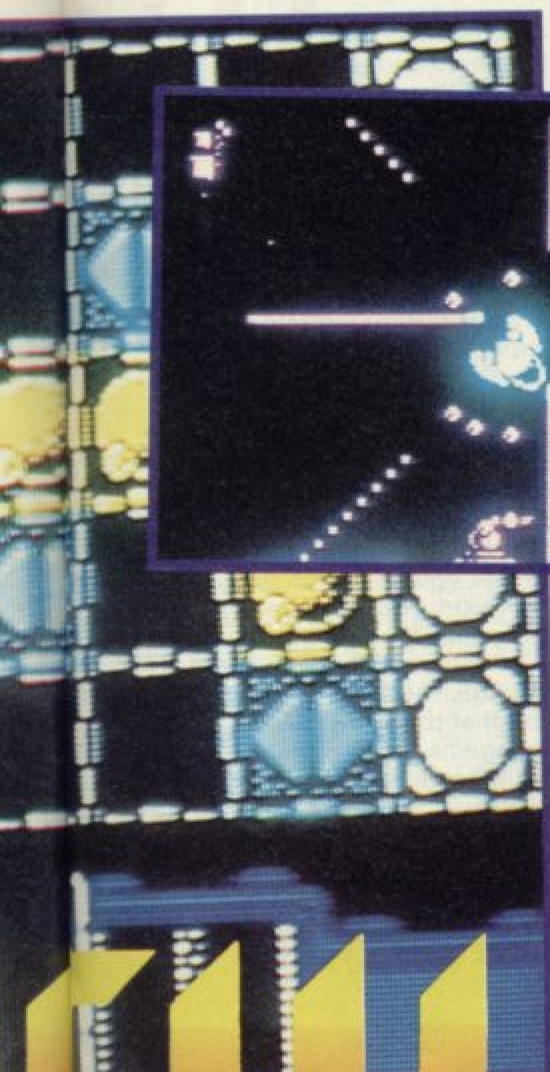
What a debut! More durable than any straightforward blast, and more fun than just a strategy game

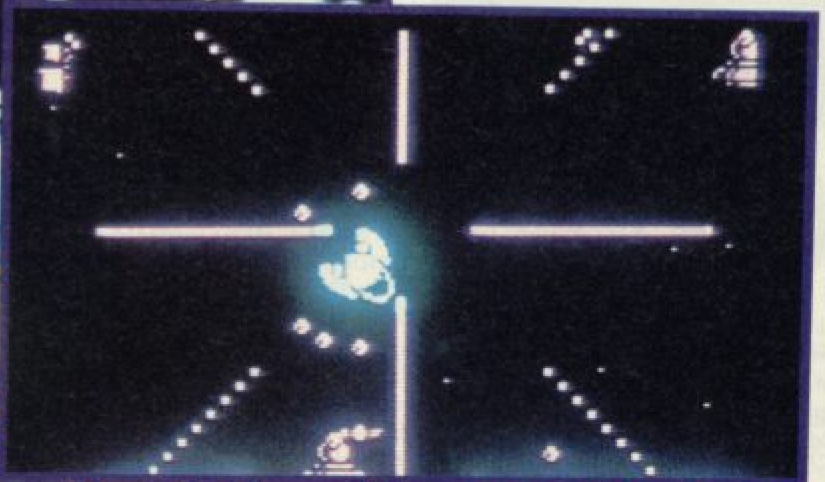
FIREFLY
Label: Ocean
Authors: Special FX
Price: £7.95
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various
Reviewer:
★★★★★ ★★★★★ 10

SINCLAIR CLASSIC USER



ARCADE REVIEW





FLY

The aim here is to come up (phnar phnar – Freddy Sick, Acting review-reader) with a combination of blue squares which will teleport you to the right place. You have to get three squares and each time your spaceship rotates faster than the last. If you hit red too many times, you'll exit the teleport and explode into a million bits.

It's vital that you get the hang of the teleport, as most of the mazes have at least one Energy Point that you can't get to by simple flying. Energy Points? Yes, they're the rapidly-flashing dots on your scanner. All the time, they spew out energy blobs. Once four have been collected, you can enter the Point in the same way as a teleport, and prime a charge to knock it out, thus depleting the aliens' security system and, eventually, after taking out all the Points in a sector, rendering it "dead".

OK, so it's strategy city, isn't it? Well, not really. You see, all the time you're flying around in the sectors, which is at least 80 per cent of the gameplay, you have to fight off the bad guys. There are stacks of different types. Some fire at you, some just fling themselves against your ship. All drain your energy if you're not careful (your energy is represented by a bar at the bottom of the screen).

If you remember the kind of thrill you got from games like Jetpac, waiting to see what the next sheet of aliens looked like, you'll be able to understand a part of the appeal of Firefly. The aliens, and especially the backgrounds, are so varied and exciting, you get the impression that you'll never run out of things to discover. The mazes vary from deserted unconstructed foundations, to high-tech constructions, each providing a new angle, forcing you to fly in a slightly different way.

The firefights you get into with the aliens are great, and as you're totally free to move around in the 8-way scrolling landscape, you've got some genuine dogfight elements thrown in too.

The graphics are good and varied, and the gameplay feels somehow superior to most games in the same field. If *Special FX* can top this, it'll shortly be able to rank itself up with names like *Ultimate*. Impressive■



TWILIGHT ZONE

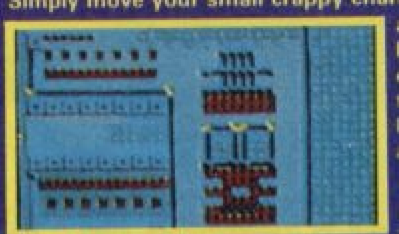
SPORE

ARCADE Label: **Mastertronic** Author: **In-house** Price: **£2.99** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **various** Reviewer: **Tony Dillon**

Generally, not very good, though the Dave Whittaker piece on the intro screen is quite nice

The good old days are a glorious and wonderful thing (at the time they were, of course, a terrible time). Think back a couple of years ago or more (the Spectrum is six years old this year, by the way), and think of the software of the time, games like Knight Lore and Jet Set Willy for example. Well, Spore is one of those games which, if it had been around then, would have been instantly forgettable.

How many games have been collect-the-thingies-whilst-avoiding-the-nasty-thingies? Yes, too many to count, and Spore adds to that list. Simply move your small crappy character that looks like a spider doing aerobics and shoot all the small blocks. Boring, especially when you consider that there is no scrolling, terrible animation and the worst level of playability I have ever come across■



★☆☆☆☆
★☆☆☆☆ **2**

FOOTBALL FRENZY

ADVENTURE Label: **Alternative Software** Price: **£1.99** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **none** Reviewer: **Tamara Howard**

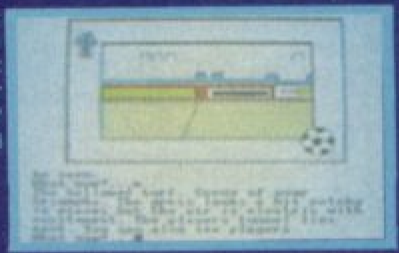
Decidedly budget adventure about a mythical football team and a lot of ridiculous problems. I wish I'd had the shredded wheat instead

Any adventure that has the temerity to tell you on the inlay card that it's Wednesday and you've just had three Shredded Wheat for breakfast has just got to be kidding.

Football Frenzy, the adventure game that has less taste than most, involves your efforts to get your team Grimsditch Rangers to the Cup Final. Judging by the state of the team on the packaging, you're in with a tough job (but you've had the shredded wheat after all). It's the standard set up, changes of location treat you to thoroughly interesting line drawings of your office, your secretary's office and some really rather fascinating tunnels.

If you're an avid football fan, you might just enjoy the game, battling through seemingly impossible odds to get to that all important match.

The vocabulary's small, the locations decidedly footballish (OK, in this instance, I guess that's a point in its favour) and why does your office carpet have to be magenta? And why is your secretary called Yellow Pages?



★★★☆☆
★★☆☆☆ **5**

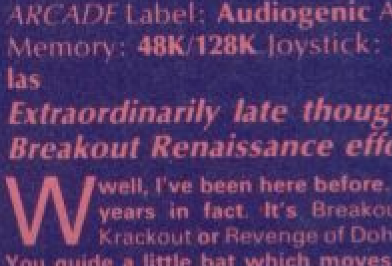
IMPACT

ARCADE Label: **Audiogenic** Author: **In-House** Price: **£9.95** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **various** Reviewer: **Jim Douglas**

Extraordinarily late though nonetheless competent Breakout Renaissance effort. Nothing new.

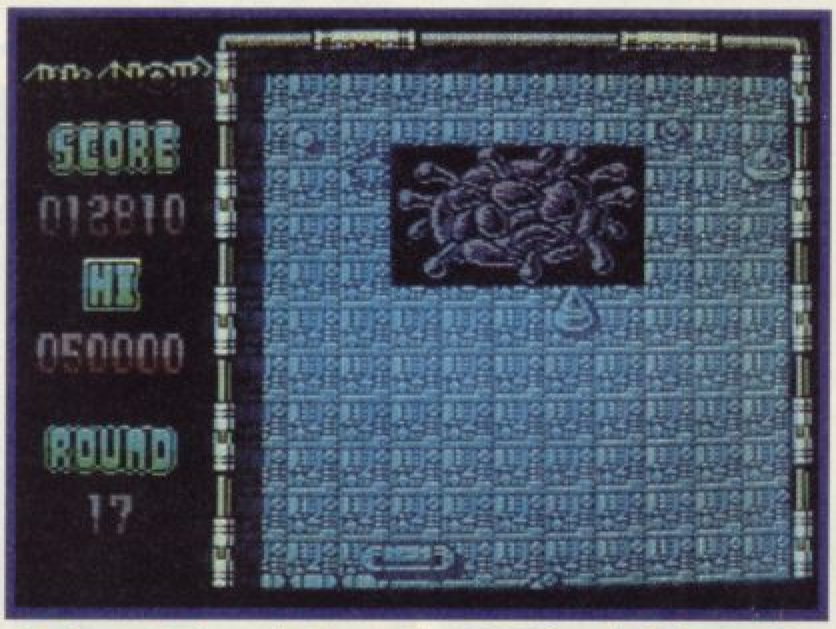
Well, I've been here before. About twelve times in the past few years in fact. It's Breakout all over again, or Arkanoid, or Krackout or Revenge of Doh if you can't remember that far back. You guide a little bat which moves smoothly along the bottom of the screen, bouncing a little white ball around the screen, demolishing coloured blocks and collecting falling wotsits which give you added powers. The selection business works in the same way as Slapfight. As you collect each wotsit, the next icon is illuminated down the right hand side, so it's a toss-up between whether you choose to enlarge your bat, light-up invisible blocks that break the balls into three etc. All the usual fare.

An interesting add-on is the fact that you can design your own layout of screens. There are eighty already in there, so you can play it for ages without getting bored. It's a shame that you'll have played all the other versions from other companies at other (cheaper) prices first though



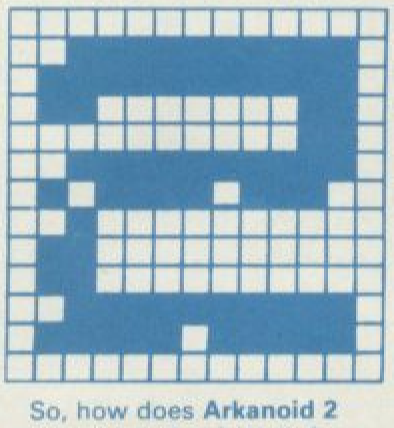
★★★☆☆
★★★☆☆ **6**

ARCADE REVIEW



This is the bit I hate doing. The bit where I'm meant to explain the background of the game to the readers who have just been born, while trying to make it interesting enough not to lose the attention of the other 99% of you who know exactly what's going on.

ARKANOID



Still there? Now, **Arkanoid** was a **Breakout** clone. **Breakout** was one of the earliest arcade machines, and entailed bouncing a ball into a wall of bricks.

You had control of a bat at the bottom of the screen which deflected the ball into the wall. **Arkanoid** took that idea one stage further and gave it a spacey type of plot. As well as the bat, ball and wall, **Arkanoid** brought in the capsules, each with different properties (extend bat, disrupt ball into 3 balls (oo-er), transport you to next level, etc). Needless to say, **Arkanoid** was very, very popular.

So, how does **Arkanoid 2** measure up, then? Well, for a start your Vaus pod (that's bat to you matey) has been destroyed or something, and you have a new bat, aptly named Vaus 2, which looks exactly the same as the first one. The idea behind the game is the game, though.

The original **Arkanoid** was graphically very sparse. It had no backgrounds and the bricks were just coloured squares.

Arkanoid's programmers have taken this point into account and have completely redone the graphics section of the game and, wow, it is a real improvement. The bricks have been redesigned so you can tell the difference between 1 hit (coloured squares) and multiple hit (like a top view of a house) bricks. The backgrounds are lovely and patterned, but can be really confusing. For example, in level 1, it is practically impossible to see the ball when playing in colour, yet in black and white there is no trouble.

There are 66 levels in **A2**, and I promise you, all are fiendishly difficult. Indestructible bricks bar your way everywhere and those little aliens still get in the way of your last brick. Very interesting, very frustrating, but still a lot of fun. Still, you will need the pods to help you through, though I must warn you that they have been changed a lot – just have a look at the table of pods on this page.

How many people in the original **Arkanoid,** got to, say, level 24 and said "This is too hard for me, I wish I didn't have to do this screen." Well **A2** is way up your street, because at the end of each screen, not one, but 2 exits will open, and you can choose which way you want to go. Very handy that.

All said, a great game. Fun, very easy to get into and frustratingly addictive. Even the legendary Graham "I don't find anything addictive" Taylor was heard to say "Just one more go." Like I say, it's a great game and very, very conceptual (only joking)■

PROGRAMMERS

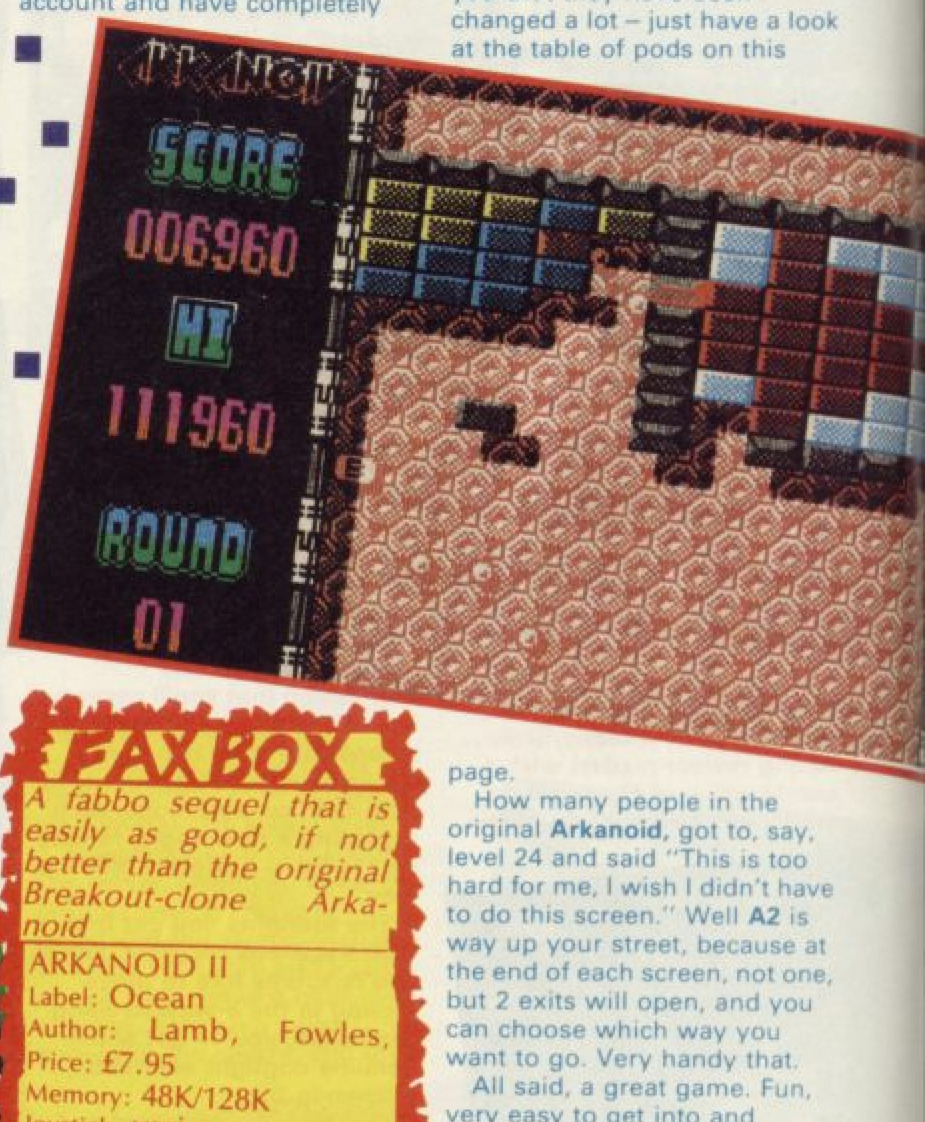
The master converters behind **Arkanoid 2** are **Mike Lamb** (main programming), **Ronnie Fowles** (graphics) and **Gary Biasallo** (music). Mike and Ronnie have worked before on previous occasions and Gary has just joined the team. Mike is currently working on **Renegade 2**.

SOFTOGRAPHY

Renegade (*Ocean*, 1987), **Arkanoid** (*Ocean*, 1987), **Combat School** (*Ocean*, 1987), **Top Gun** (*Ocean*, 1986).

WHAT EACH POD DOES

Capsule letter	Capsule properties
R	Reduce bat size
E	Extend bat size
S	Slow ball speed
D	Disrupt ball into 3 balls (oo-er)
L	Change bat into a laser
T	Give you twin bats (two bats side by side)
G	Gives you a tail to deflect the ball
Sc	Scrolls the background
E	Opens the exits to the next level
C	Lets your bat catch the ball
Boxing glove	Either: 1) Splits the ball into lots of normal balls 2) Turns the ball into a ball 'smash through everything' ball 3) Splits the ball into lots of 'smash' balls





FAXBOX

A fabbo sequel that is easily as good, if not better than the original Breakout-clone Arkanoid

ARKANOID II
Label: Ocean
Author: Lamb, Fowles
Price: £7.95
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Tony Dillon

★★★★☆ 8



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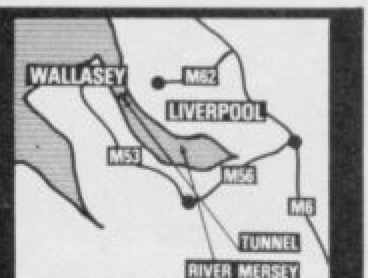
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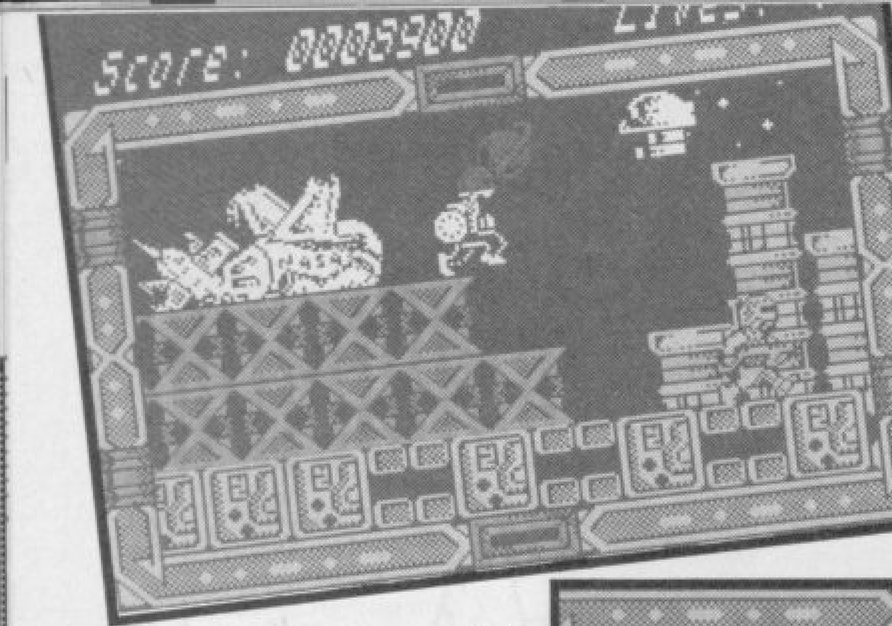
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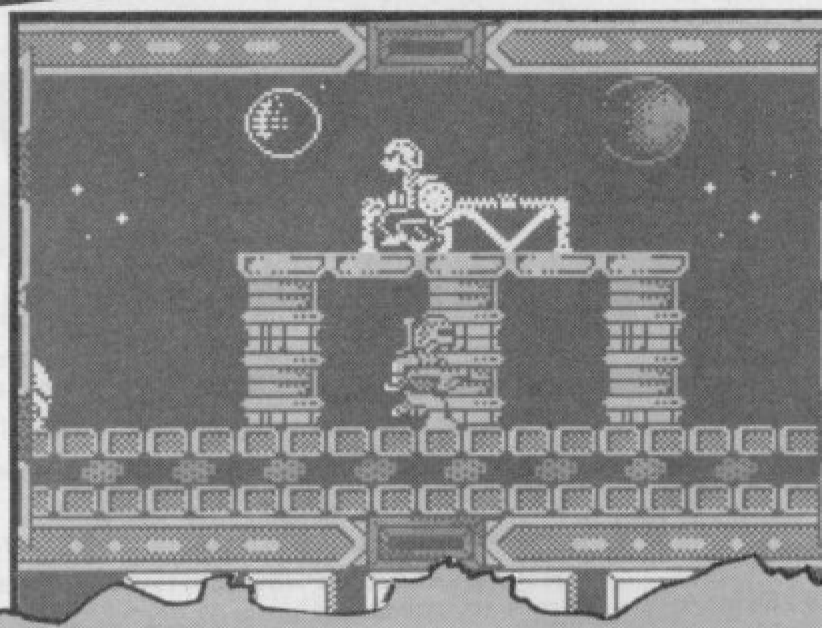
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NORT

Isn't clairvoyance a wonderful thing? I mean, isn't it amazing how the people who write the dodgy storylines on cassette boxes can tell us exactly what will happen in, say, 500 years' time. Funny too, how they always say the same sort of things. For example, in the year 2499, a huge space station is going to be built. But, just as it is about to be completed something will go drastically wrong (again). An alien force will take over (again) and this one little robot fellow will be sent up to conquer the aliens (again). Sounds like a lot of fun, eh? Guess you know what's coming next. Guess what? You're going to be that little robot.

Yes, in **Northstar**, you get to play a little robot who has to destroy a whole alien force.



Why a robot? Well, there's no oxygen out there, so a human wouldn't survive 5 minutes. Inferior races, eh? (Why do I

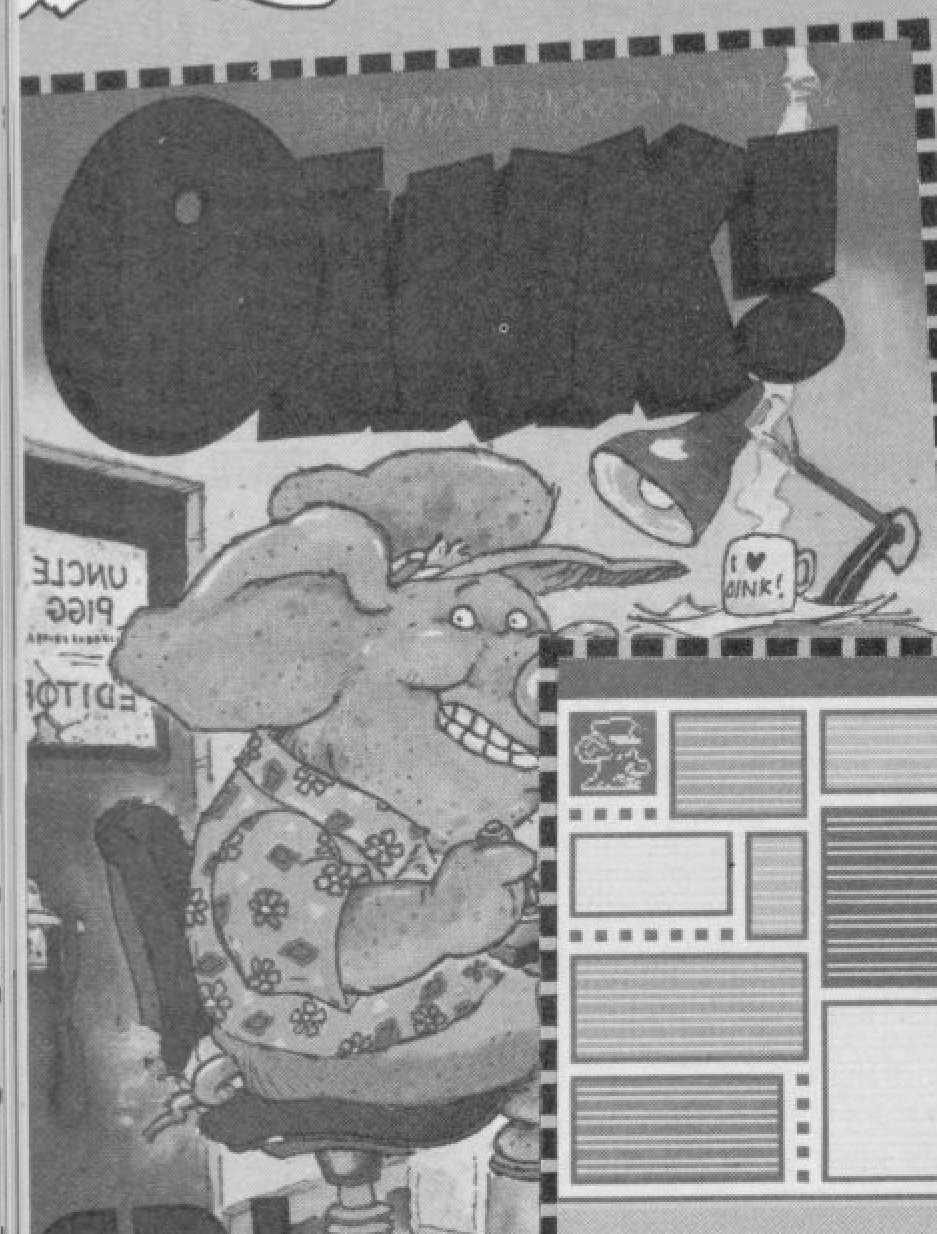
FAXBOX

A competent and fun scroller, but overuse of colour has caused major attribute problems

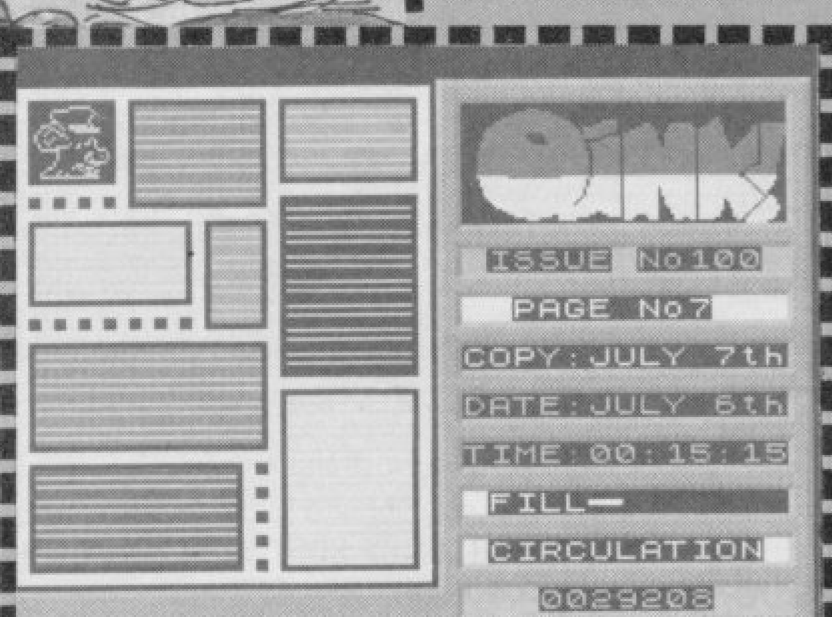
NORTHSTAR
Label: Gremlin
Author: In-house
Price: £8.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

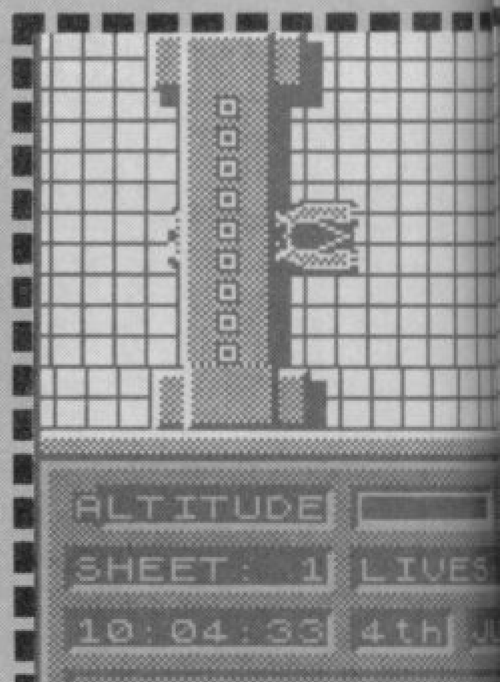
Reviewer: Tony Dillon

★★★★☆ 7



Problems, problems. What do I call this game? Do I put it in the Arcade action of the reviews, or do I put it in the Simulation section? For yes, believe it or not, Oink is an exact simulation of how comics and magazines are put together. Yes, it's true. You may think that we (ie The SU team) spend all day slaving over hot typewriters, brains pouring out of our ears trying to get away from the serious thinking that is left on their shoulders (!?!), but no. (Tony this is madness start the review again and see me after school G.T.)





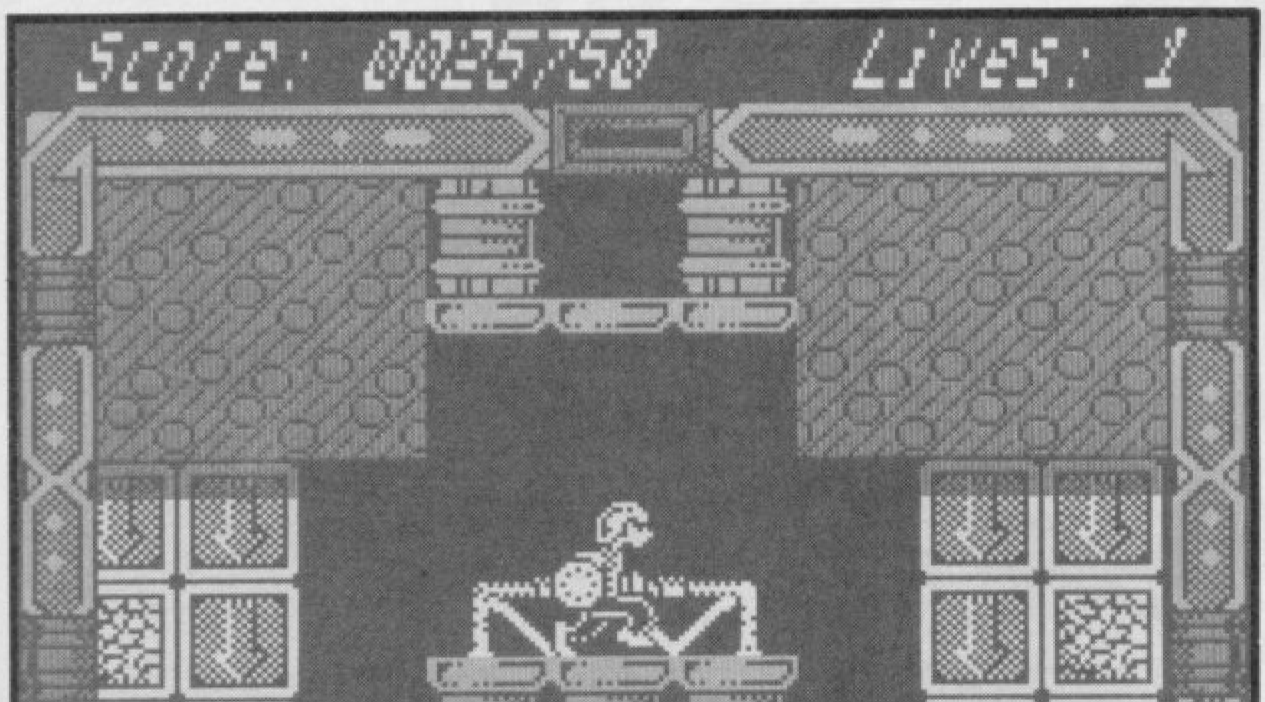
In Oink you have to send assorted comic strip characters out to find the missing page panels before the copy date otherwise you'll, "Run out of Piggin' time". Each character enters their own mini arcade games and tries to get as many panels back as possible to fill the 9 pages in the magazine.

The first game is Pete's Pimple, **or to put it another way,** Breakout. **You must bounce Pete's spot around the screen, knocking out the bricks and collecting bonus panels. Dill's verdict on this part: trash. The ball only moves in two directions and you can't destroy the killer fish that sly**

HSTAR

keep using the word, eh, eh?) You are armed with a grabby arm kind of thing, a little like the club in **Rygar.** With it you can destroy the aliens as well as opening pods that contain extra points or weapons such as smart bombs. I tell you, you

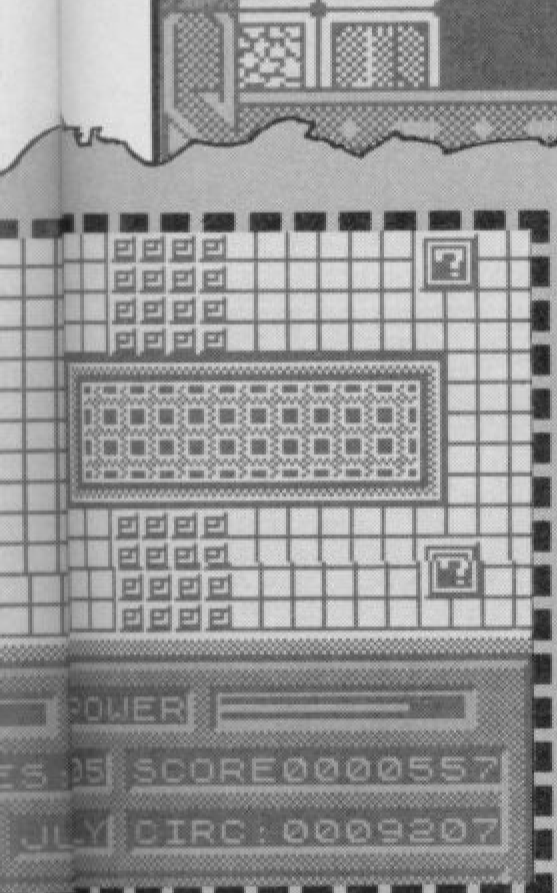
ARCADE REVIEW



need them, things can get pretty hectic. And talking of pretty, the game is. Very pretty. The graphics are clear and large, and the animation is quite good, as is the scrolling. Colour is used badly, though. In Spectrum terms, that means that a lot has been used in large lumps with very little thought. The attribute clash is appalling and the enemy are practically invisible when you see them walk in front of something yellow. Tut tut■





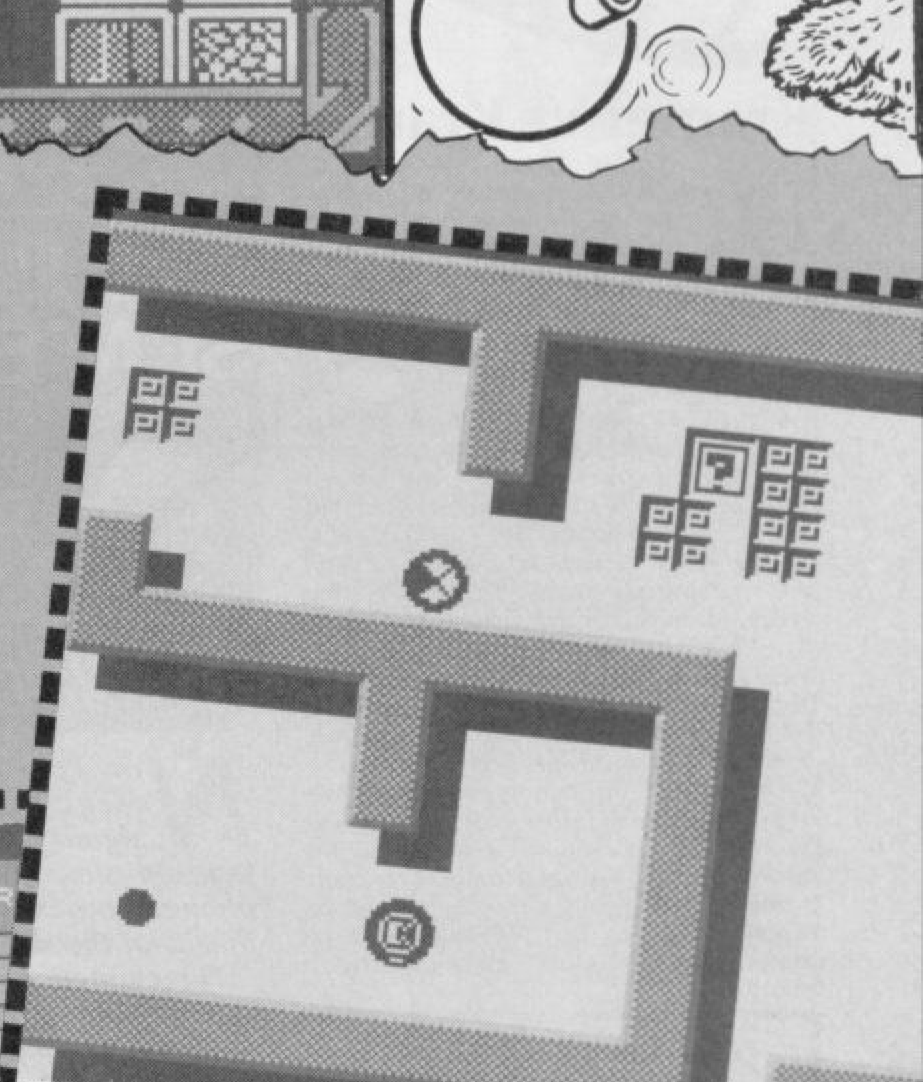


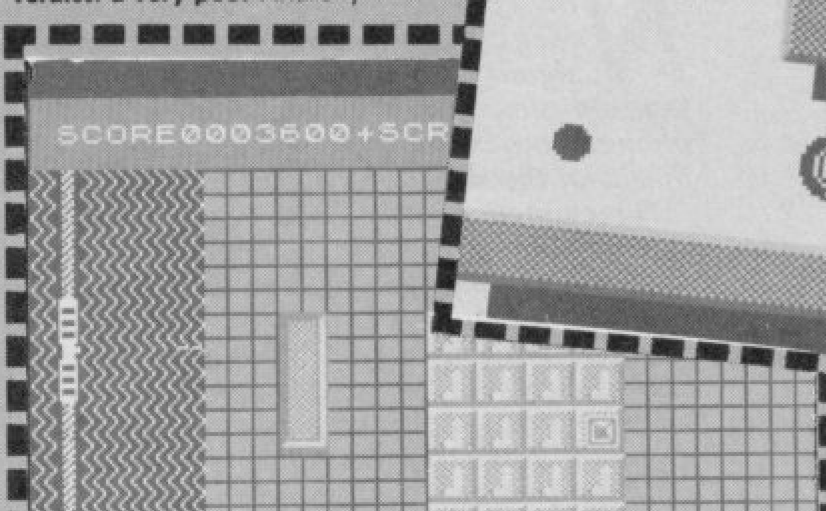
towards you all the time – it's frustratingly hard for no good reason.

The second game is Rubbishman. **Fly Rubbishman over and under obstacles along a very slow scrolling backdrop very similar to** Uridium, **except nowhere near as good. Dill's verdict: Crud. You have no indication of the height of the obstacles and no matter how far you get, you still go back to the start when you die.**

The next game's hero is one Tom Thug **who has to drive his thugmobile around a large flip-screen area, shooting nasties and collecting panels. Dill's verdict: a very poor** Anarchy **imitation. The main character moves far too slowly and the game itself is completely unplayable.**

Though it is absolute rubbish and the individual sections are laughably bad. You get an odd satisfaction when you complete a page and you are given the opportunity to read the comic. ■





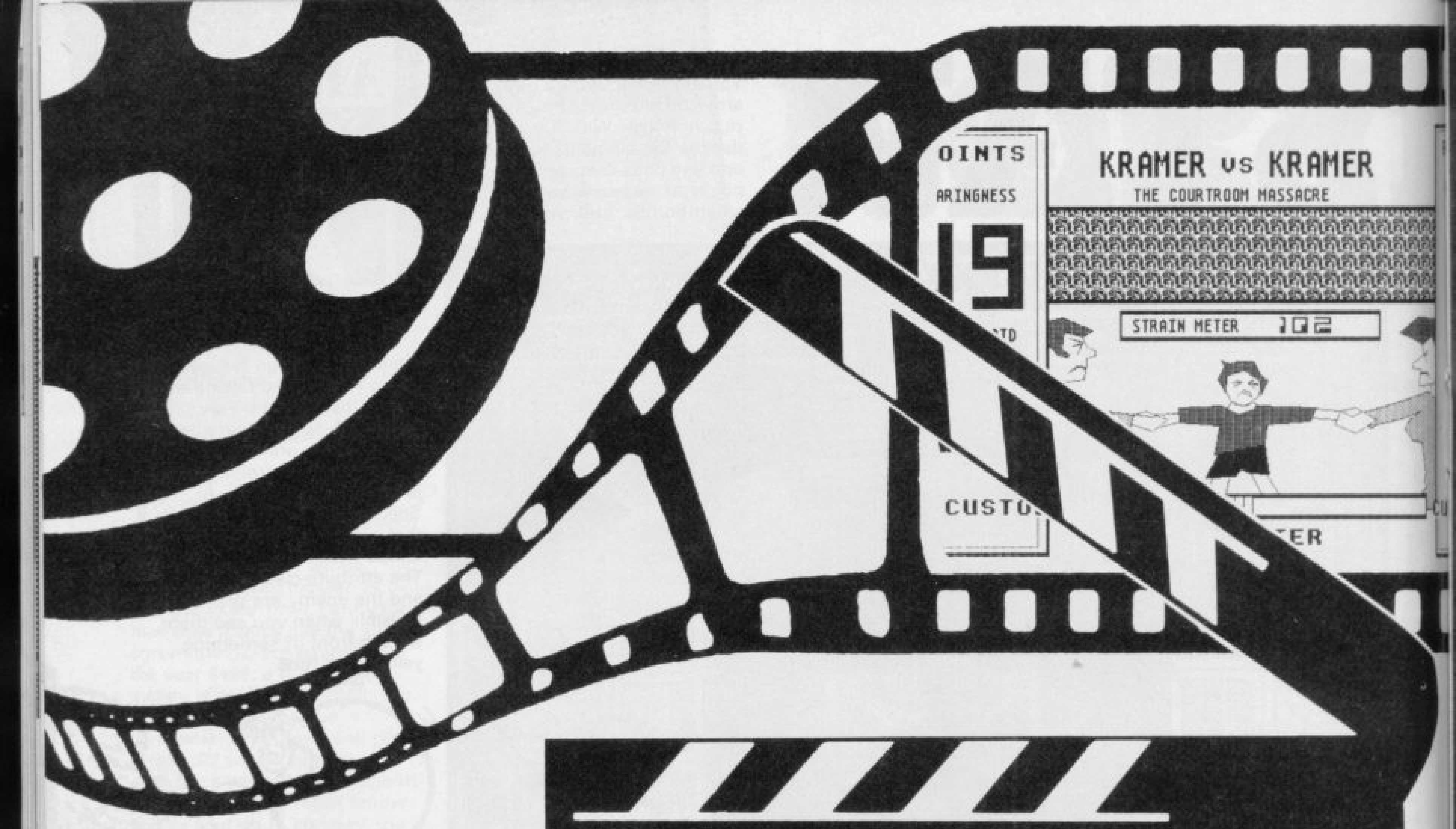
FAXBOX

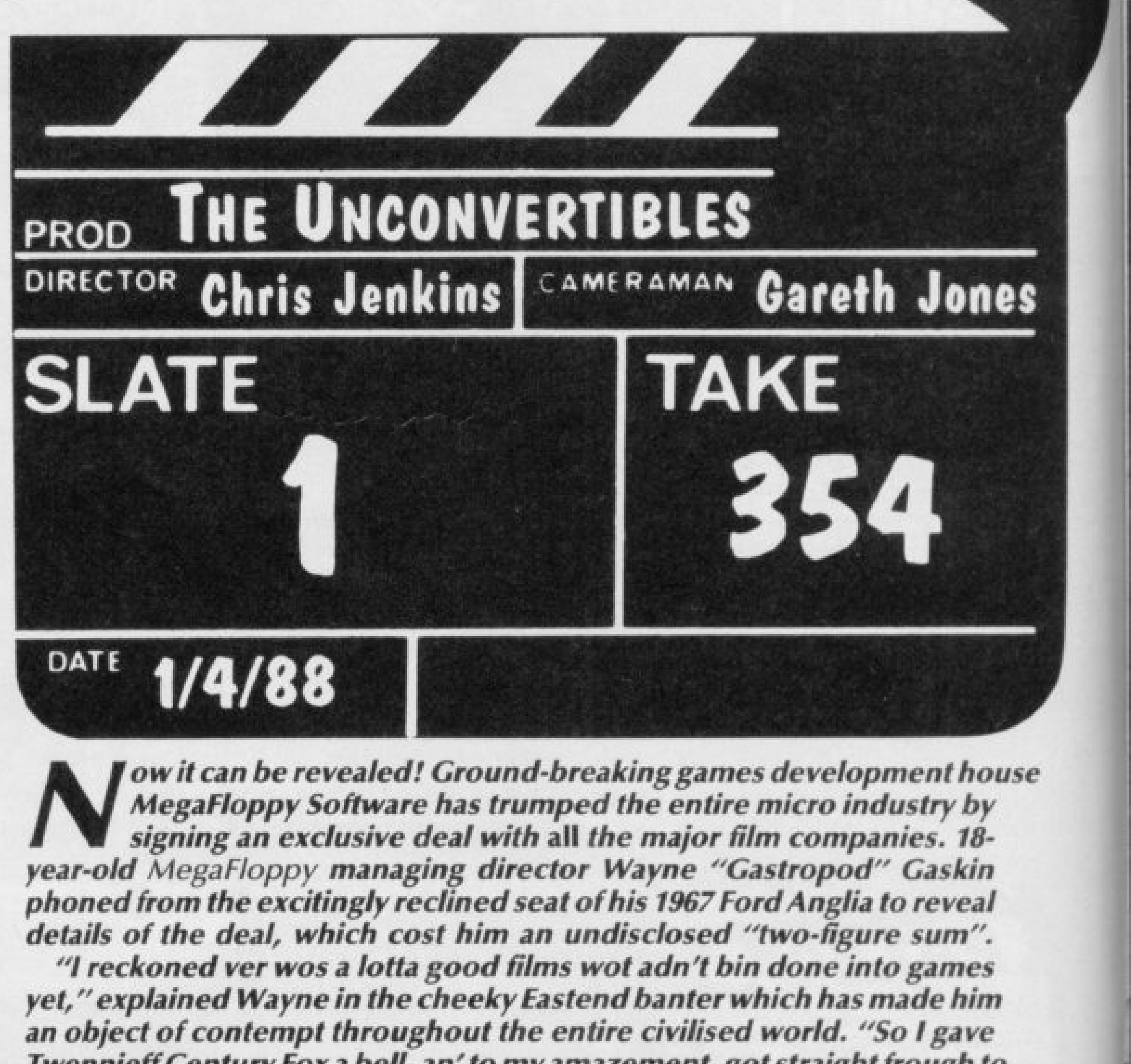
Slow, unplayable, graphically poor and generally crap. Still, it's a lot of fun

OINK
Label: CRL
Author: Wise Owl
Price: £8.95
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Tony Dillon

★★★☆☆
★★★☆☆ 6



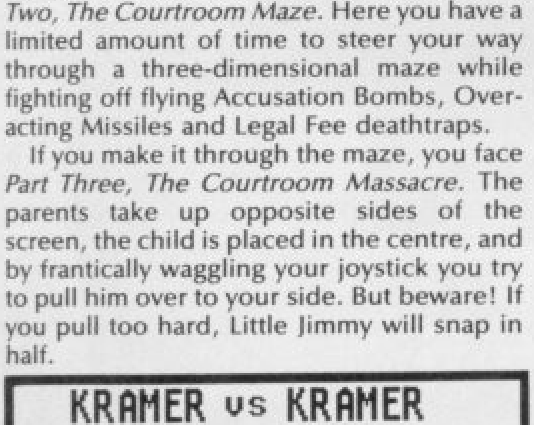


Kramer Vs Kramer

Dustin Hoffman and Meryl Streep starred in this heart-rending tale of divorce and the battle for custody of their son. Or was it Robert Redford and Kathleen Turner? Still, you can't tell the difference from looking at Barry Hitler's poorly-digitised portraits of the stars, so it doesn't matter.

Kramer Vs Kramer – The Courtroom Massacre is a game for one or two players. In the first part, you choose whether you want to play the mother or the father, and you assign "custody points" for such factors as "caringness", "stability", "acting ability" and "earning potential". These will affect the performance of your character in *Part Two, The Courtroom Maze.* Here you have a limited amount of time to steer your way through a three-dimensional maze while fighting off flying Accusation Bombs, Overacting Missiles and Legal Fee deathtraps.

If you make it through the maze, you face *Part Three, The Courtroom Massacre.* The parents take up opposite sides of the screen, the child is placed in the centre, and by frantically waggling your joystick you try to pull him over to your side. But beware! If you pull too hard, Little Jimmy will snap in half.

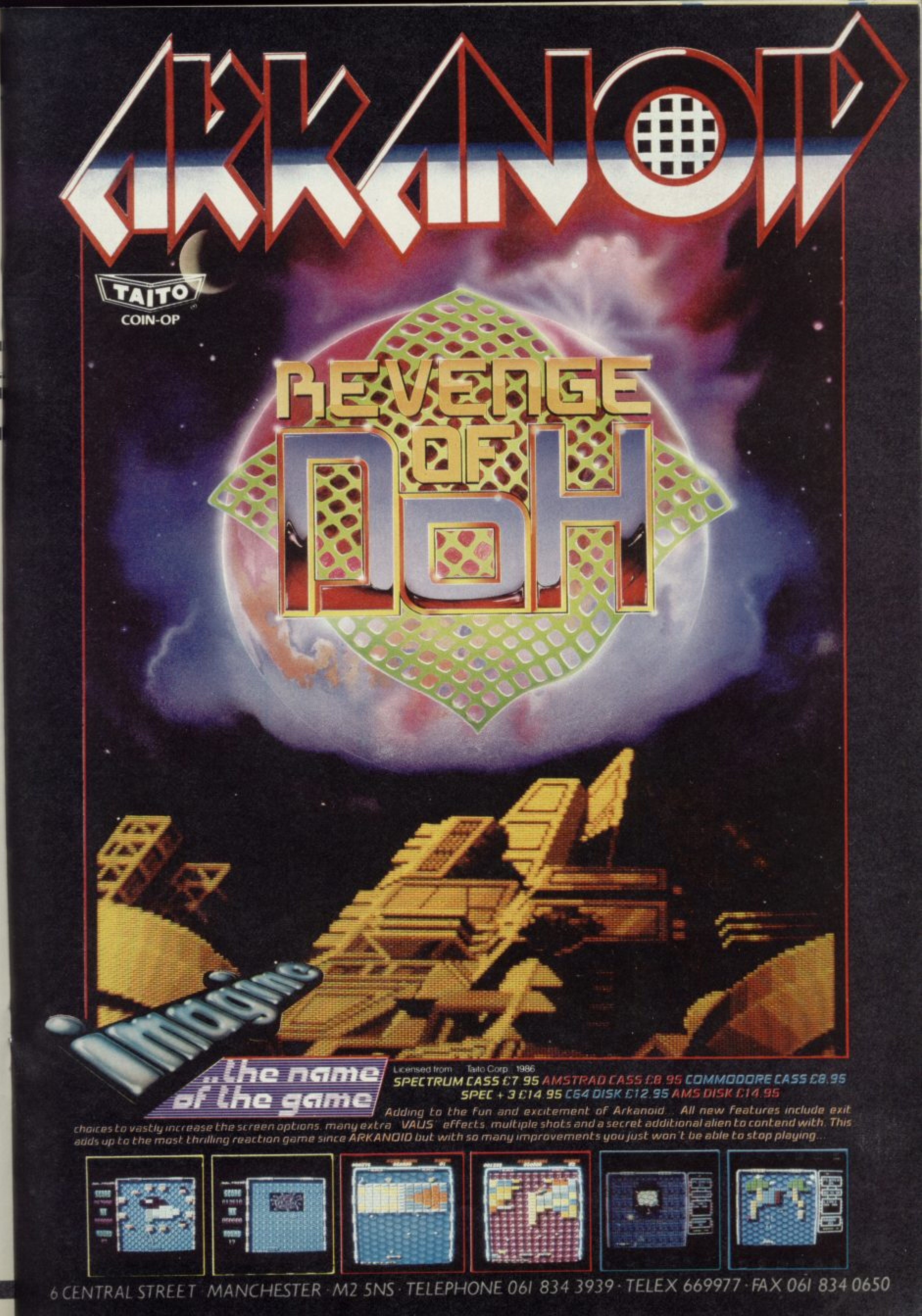


Now it can be revealed! Ground-breaking games development house MegaFloppy Software has trumped the entire micro industry by signing an exclusive deal with all the major film companies. 18-year-old** MegaFloppy **managing director Wayne "Gastropod" Gaskin phoned from the excitingly reclined seat of his 1967 Ford Anglia to reveal details of the deal, which cost him an undisclosed "two-figure sum".

"I reckoned ver wos a lotta good films wot adn't bin done into games yet," explained Wayne in the cheeky Eastend banter which has made him an object of contempt throughout the entire civilised world. "So I gave Twennieff Century Fox a bell, an' to my amazement, got straight frough to Sam Goldwyn. Anyway, 'e said 'e was Sam Goldwyn, an' for a 'uge but undisclosed sum 'e gives me ver micro games rights for every film ever made, which I reckoned was a pretty good deal."

Now Wayne's top team of programmers will be getting to work to produce games versions of some of the most popular films of the talking picture era. "We got all our best lads on it; Timmie an' Jimmie Sweetie, Bob Scratcher an' 'is dog Morris, Slick Rick McQuick the Ten-Minute Wonder, Shane Gormless, the Sadowitz Triplets an' Barry Hitler. I reckon we should 'ave ver first games out by a week next Tuesday."

SU can now exclusively reveal what all the other computer magazines will be exclusively revealing in two months' time; details of** MegaFloppy's **first batch of games on the Film Fun label (£1.49 from all good chemists).


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imagine
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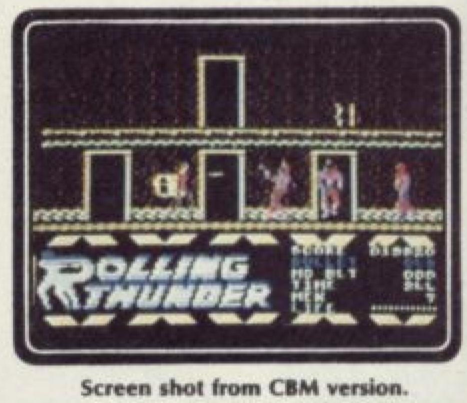

SINCLAIR user
THE BARD'S
TALE



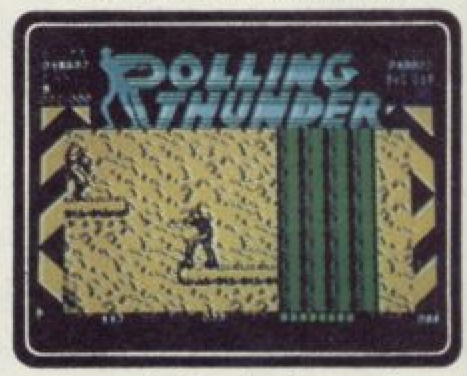
Poster No 12 *April*

Remove the staples carefully and remove poster!





Screen shot from CBM version.



Screen shot from Spectrum version.



Screen shot from Amstrad version.

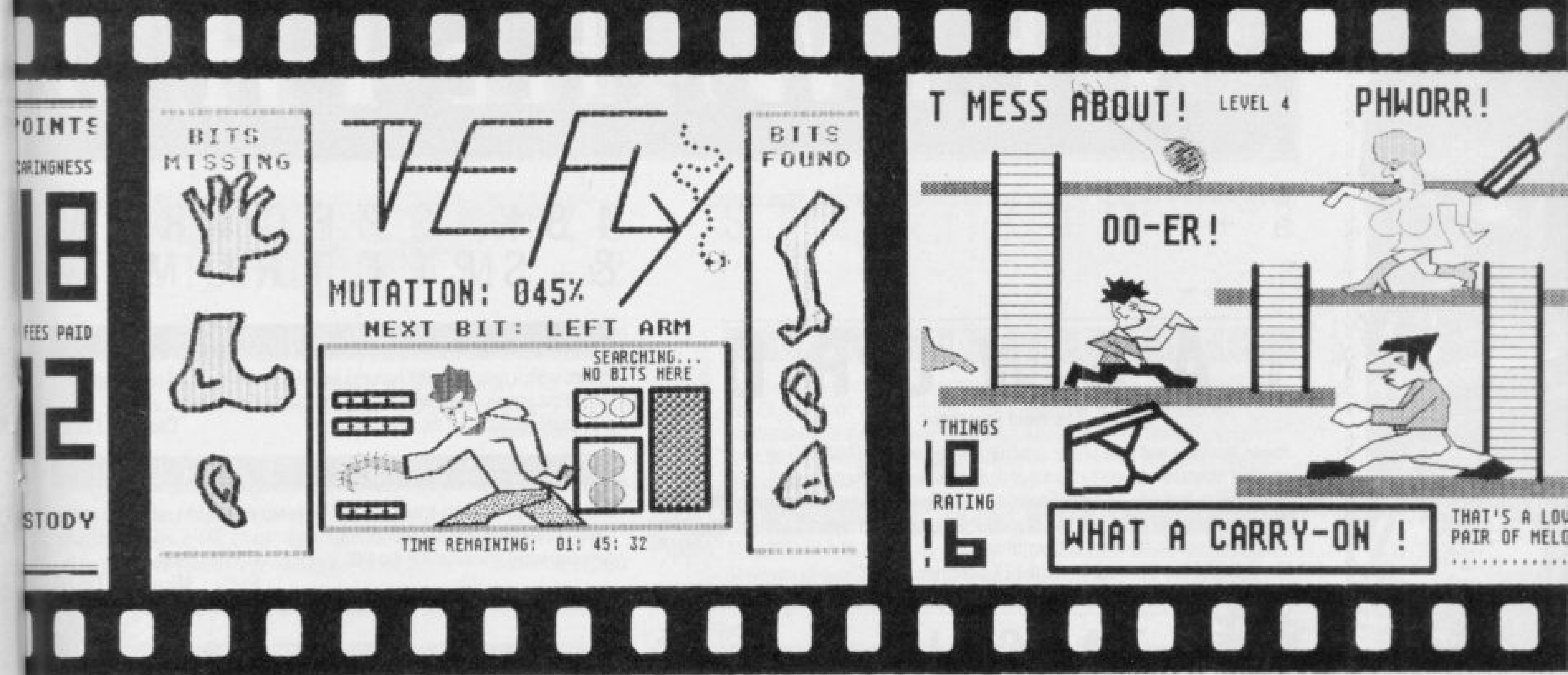


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The Big Sleep

The classic Humphrey Bogart *filme noire,* presented as a text adventure with a few very small, very badly-drawn pictures. "We are bitterly ashamed of vis one" admits Wayne Gaskin. "We farmed it out to *Pixie Adventure Software* on the understandin' vey would produce a state-owe-art inneractive adventure game wiv free-d graffix an' speech synfesis. Wot do we get? A load of tosh wot I'd be ashamed to give away in a box of Frosties."

Humphrey Bogart's role as tough, wise-cracking private dick Sam Spade may well be presented with loving care in the adventure, but no-one has yet managed to get further than the first screen which reads "You are asleep". Even so, the split between *MegaFloppy* and *Pixie Adventure Software* could have been amicable, were it not for George Pixie sending out a press release accusing Wayne Gaskin of being "the spawn of Satan, lower than offal and a bad smell in the nose of humanity." Legal proceedings are expected to follow.

The Fly

David Cronenberg's horrific tale of a scientific experiment gone wrong. When researcher Seth Brundle develops a matter transporter, he is eager to try it out on himself. Combined on a molecular level with an un-noticed fly in the transference chamber, Brundle finds himself metamorphosing into an horrific hybrid of man and insect.

Your task is to pick up bits of Brundle as they drop off, and stick them back into place. Stalking around his lab, you get five points for recovering a finger, ten for an ear and twenty for a nose. To get big points, you have to be prepared to lose the odd leg or arm, but it's more difficult to get around and pick things up with limbs missing.

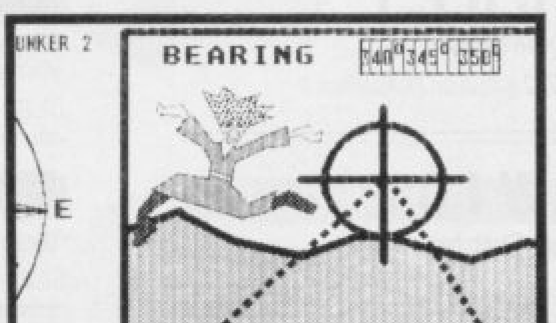
You can never really win, since you'll inevitably go to pieces in the end. The fun is in delaying the inevitable as long as possible, a bit like *MegaFloppy Software* and the liquidators.

The Sound of Music

Possibly the surprise hit of next Christmas (or the Christmas after, depending on how long the notoriously slow Shane Gormless takes to finish the coding).

In the film, the ever-lovely Julie Andrews plays a tutor employed to educate the charming children of the Von Trapp family. Together they skip over the Swiss mountains, sing happy songs about raindrops and kittens, and learn heart-warming lessons about family life.

Finally, the heart of the stern father melts and he admits his love for the wholesome Julie. Meanwhile, the clouds of war are brewing, and the threat of Fascism cast a dark shadow over the future.



You control a complex of Wermacht machine-gun nests situated in the Alps. As your infra-red scanner detects the approach of the dreaded Von Trapps, you must move ammunition to the nearest emplacement. Then, switching to targeting mode, you gun down the loathsome children as they skip off over the horizon. Miss one, and it sneaks into your emplacement, spreading its ghastly sweetness and wholesomeness and putting the machine-gun out of action. Look out for *The Sound of Music Part 2 – The Return of Julie.*

What a Carry On

Whoops! It's the saucy *Carry On* team in the first of a series of 127 almost identical platforms-and-ladders games! Cheeky Ted Nobber (Sidney James) is searching for the great Oozalum bird (you know, the one that disappeared up its own . . . erm . . .) but first he has to find ten Rude Things hidden throughout Carry On land, including a lavatory brush, a loofah, a pair of Y-fronts, a bedpan and Barbara Windsor's brassiere (two objects).

Extra points are gained by completing famous phrases, such as "Infamy! Infamy! (They've all got it in for me!)"; "I think we can have it off now, nurse. (But what about this plaster doctor)"; and "Phwooer! Look at that pair' (Yes, and the other girl's not bad either)".

You lose point if you bump into Dr Pott (Jim Dale, Mr Boggis (Peter Butterworth), Sid Groper (Charles Hawtrey), Mrs Hardup (Joan Sims), or Professor Twitte (Kenneth Williams), but gain a bonus if you manage to avoid the wife or bump into a Saucy Bit of Stuff (Carol Hawkins). Plenty of rude noises, non-stop laughs and a complete lack of any intellectual demands make this an ideal family game.

Star Trek – The Motion Picture

Unconnected with *Rainbird's Star Trek* title, this is a faithful version of the original film which bored audiences everywhere. The graphics, produced by Bob Scratcher (and his dog Morris) are wonderfully detailed, showing the new-look USS Enterprise and its faithful crew heading towards a vast interstellar space cruiser. As they penetrate the energy cloud surrounding the alien ship, you'll gasp with amazement at the 256-colour graphics (and that's on the ZX81).

Speech samples of all the major characters "Phasers inoperative!" "Blimey, it's a wormhole!" and "You should have thought of that before we went into hyperspace!" add to the atmosphere. Unfortunately, although the game looks wonderful, there's absolutely no plot at all. Just like the film.

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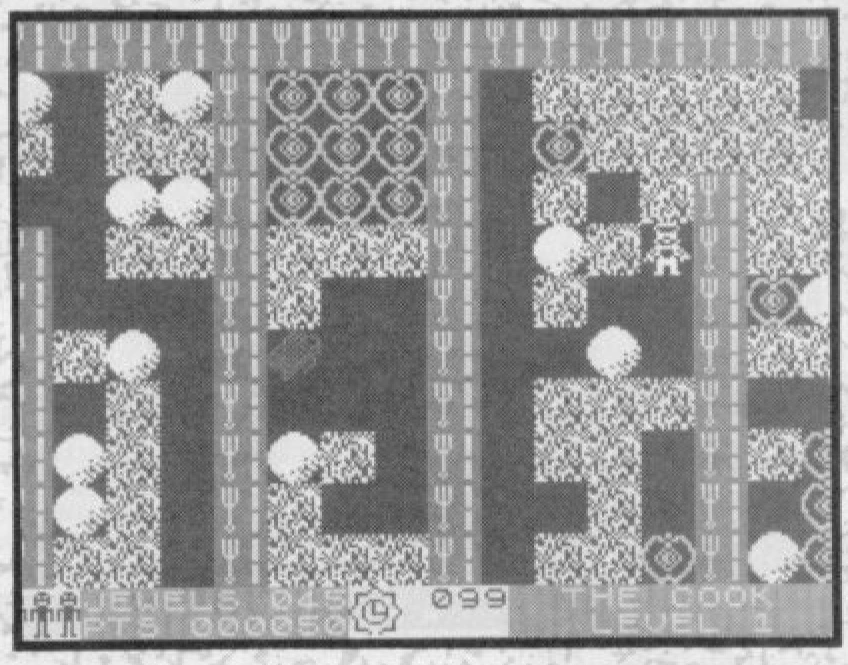
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ARCADE REVIEW



FAXBOX

Quite a good attempt at nostalgia, and with a free game on the B side. My advice is, if you see it, buy it

ROCKFORD
Label: Mastertronic
Author: Fernando Harrera
Price: £2.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various
Reviewer: Tony Dillon

★★★★☆ ★★★★☆ 8

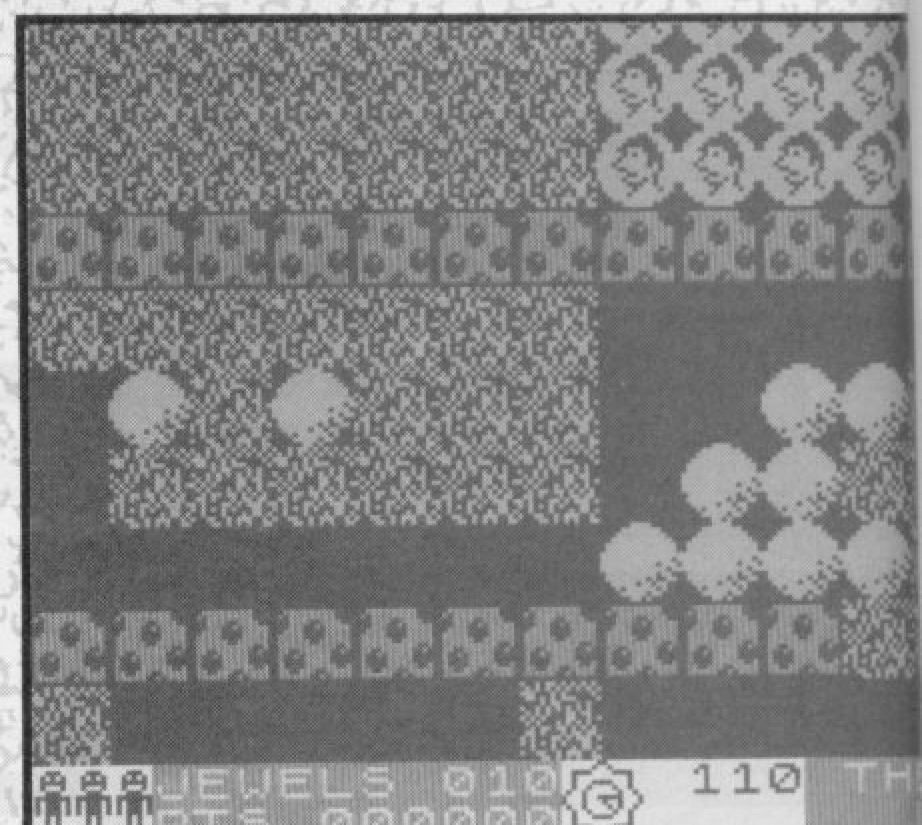
ROCKFORD

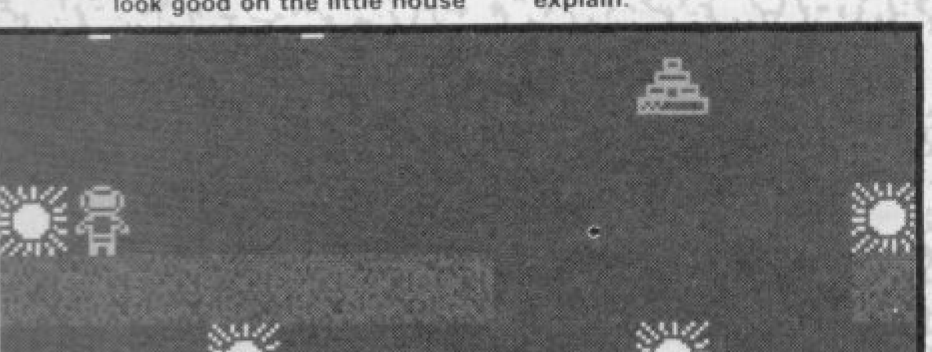
It has to be said. Mastertronic is the master of exploitation. It takes a certified popular computer character and turns him into an arcade game by the use of some relatively cheap computer boards. Then, as the arcade game has become reasonably popular, they do a computer conversion of the arcade game of the computer game. Good thinking, eh? With a large profit too, I suppose. But, for those who are new to the Spectrum market, here is a short portfolio on Rockford.

Way back in the mists of ancient time, a software firm by the name of First Star wrote a game. A game so simple, yet fiendishly difficult, it would have computer owners in their thousands playing for eons. Boulderdash was born, and its main character, a stick man with a large head called Rockford became a national hero. Who was he, where did he come from, what was his telephone number? This is what the public wanted to know.

But he wasn't happy. "I wish they had designed me a bit better. I look like the little bit of chewed Lego that no one can find any use for and will never look good on the little house they've been making for the last two weeks." Little did he know that his dream was soon to come true. One day, Mr Mastertronic and his younger executive, Mr Arcadia, came knocking on his door. "Hello," they said, "we'd like to put you in an arcade game, make you look a lot better, give you 5 disguises, give you 5 different areas to play in and generally make you lots of money." Before long, the contract was signed and Rockford was immortalised on a chip on an Amiga A1000 motherboard.

You can wake up now. The history lesson's over. Rockford has changed. I would just like to point that out so that the millions of Boulderdash fans don't go running down to their latest software dealers brandishing £5 notes. He may have changed, but not for the worst in all cases (though he has in some). Allow me to explain.

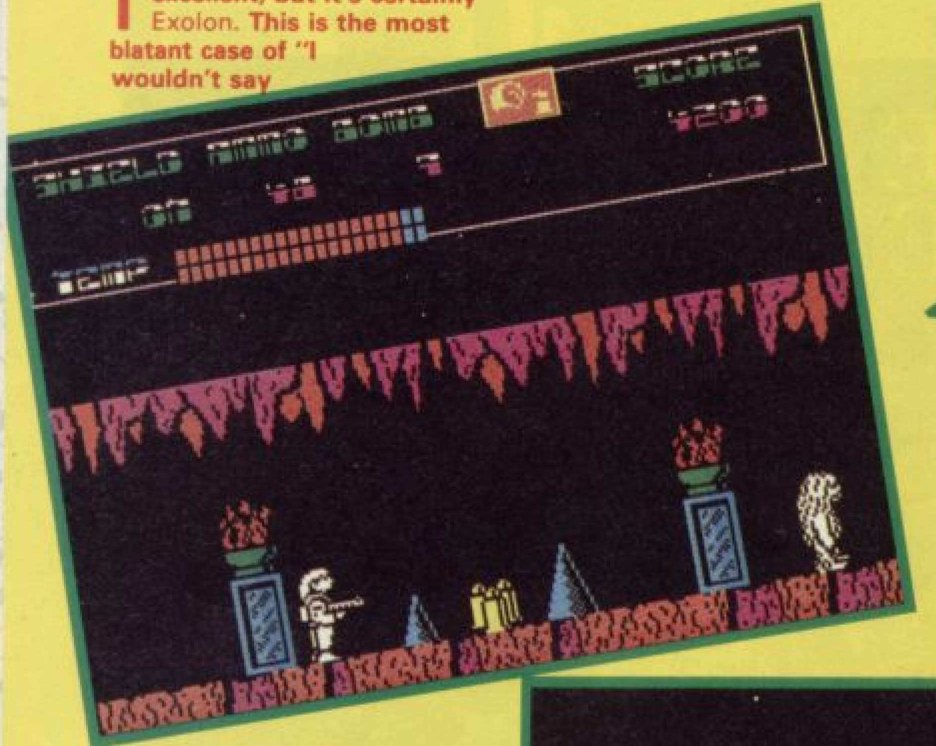




Rockford is not a single person anymore. He is now 5 people, any of whom you can select from the start. Each of his 5 personae has a specified area to explore, each with a certain number of levels. You can choose to be a doctor, an astronaut, a cook or even a cowboy. Each character has different things to collect. For the cowboy it's gold coins, for the cook, it's hearts. The game is played in the same way as Boulderdash, really, which is a good thing. The scrolling has been improved, although some ardent followers might disagree with me on that. The graphics have also been greatly improved. You can now see what he's meant to be, be it a spaceman or a cowboy. To some extent, though, the gameplay has been lost. The one great thing about the original was the excitement it generated and the pure arcade action it contained. I still play it now, and I can name quite a few others that do too. Now the cuteness has gone from the game. Rockford is a regular computer character, not the sort to be invited on chat shows. Still, you can't win 'em all.

I'd say it was a good effort by Mastertronic. Though I can't see the majority of BD lovers being overly excited by this, it's still a good game in it's own right, and when you consider the price, a very good buy. But wait, I haven't told you all. As the game is out on the new MAD X range, you get a free game on the B side, which in this case, is Rockman. I think that's one to look out for, don't you?■

YETI

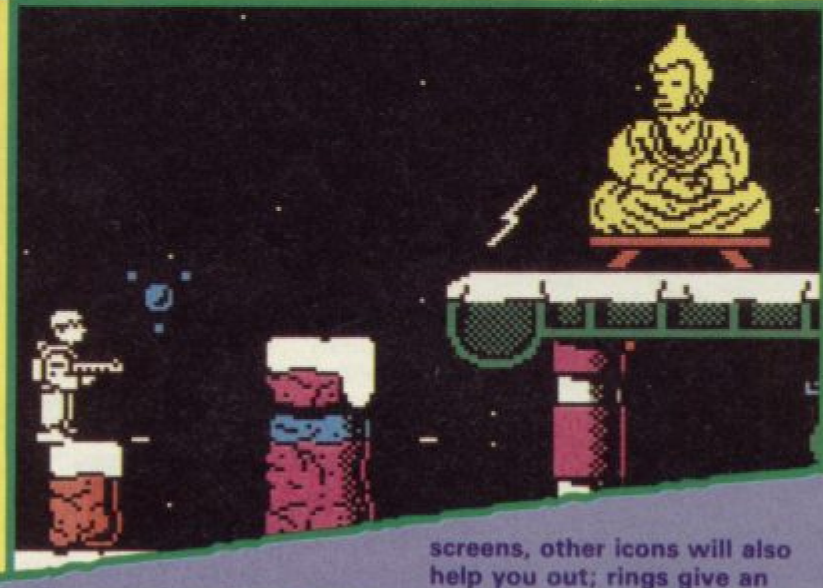




I wouldn't say that *Yeti* is excellent, but it's certainly *Exolon*. This is the most blatant case of "I wouldn't say it's a rip-off but it's certainly very heavily influenced" since *Exploding Fist* and *International Karate*.

One of the first titles on the new Destiny label, headed by Francis Lee (ex-Beyond, ex-Starlight), *Yeti* has some bizarre tie-up with Chris Bonington, an expedition to the Himalayas, a huge cash prize, and the famous hairy monster which has been the object of speculation since someone found a tin of Yetiburgers in a monastery in 1922.

The game, though doesn't appear to have much to do with the amiable anthropoid.

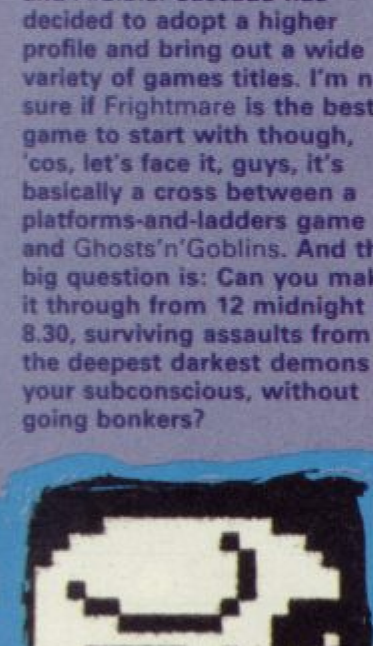


As you load it up, one word will spring to mind, and that word will be *Exolon*. The similarities are too staggering to be unintentional. Like *Exolon*, *Yeti* is a horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-up featuring carefully designed backgrounds to eliminate colour clash, an armoured figure with a gun and an over-the-shoulder missile launcher, and a series of obstacles including projectile launchers,



The longer you dream, the worse it gets . . . no, it's not an SU editorial lunch, it's *Frightmare*, *Cascade's* latest bid to disprove the, "one-game company," tag.

Since the success of *A.C.E.* and *A.C.E.2*, *Cascade* has decided to adopt a higher profile and bring out a wide variety of games titles. I'm not sure if *Frightmare* is the best game to start with though, 'cos, let's face it, guys, it's basically a cross between a platforms-and-ladders game and *Ghosts'n'Goblins*. And the big question is: Can you make it through from 12 midnight to 8.30, surviving assaults from the deepest darkest demons of your subconscious, without going bonkers?



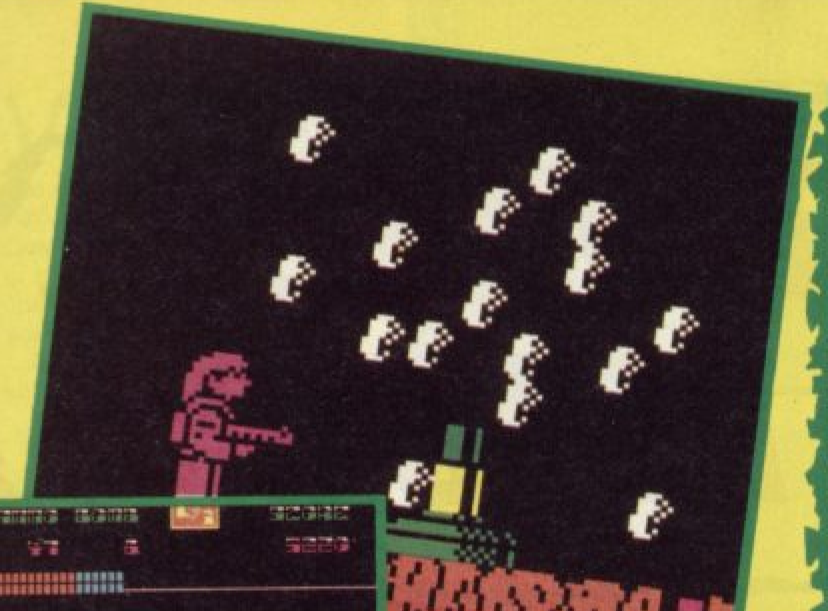
There are four dream zones to play through (each with many screens) and each time you enter a new screen, the clock ticks off an extra six minutes. The screens, consisting of the usual platforms, pillars, ruined buildings and plants, are haunted by all the mythical ghoulies of legend and history; vampires, werewolves, medusas, severed hands, zombies, mummies and swamp things. Of course, hidden throughout the screens are weapons which can be used to kill off various monsters; holy water kills practically anything; watches slow them down; crucifixes freeze zombies, demons, serpents and various other offspring of evil; and many of the less powerful monsters are vulnerable to ordinary bullets shot from the revolver. If you find another revolver, it doubles your rate of fire.

There's also a single silver revolver, which is the only weapon which will destroy zombies, werewolves, and Satan. Well it would be wouldn't it? You can collect several weapons, and switch between them using the inventory at the bottom of the screen.

As you leap around the screens, other icons will also help you out; rings give an extra life, wings increase the size of your jumps, a transporter moves you across the screen, and a chalice increases your dream state rating. This rating varies from BAD DREAM to NEFARIOUS FRIGHTMARE (which is the height of scariness). The pairs of nouns and adjectives change as you score more points by shooting monsters, picking up chalices and using weapons.

Now you might have noticed







pits, bobbing spikes and flying missiles. Like Exolon, you hold the fire button down for more than a moment to launch a missile. Like Exolon, this results in an explosion of particles. Like Exolon, you collect bombs and bullets as you move along. Like Exolon, some of the obstacles are unavoidable and have to be demolished. At first glance, even the backgrounds look the same; but you soon realise that instead of science fiction scenery, you're looking at Himalayan hardware. Instead of gun towers, you have prayer temples; instead of missile launchers, smiling Buddhas; instead of space warriors, trappist monks.

FAXBOX

*Whoah! Haven't I seen this somewhere before? **Exolon** goes Himalayan*

YETI
Label: Destiny
Author: Cybadyne
Price: £8.95
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various
Reviewer: Chris Jenkins
★★★★☆
★★★☆☆ 7

As you trudge through the landscape blasting obstacles, ducking under missiles and leaping to pot projectiles, you have to keep an eye on your falling temperature and ammunition levels. As you get towards the end of each level, you'll find a scooter which allows you to go faster; the same sort of effect as the armour which defends you in Exolon, really. Right at the end of each level, there's a shambling Yeti which is the object of the quest. So far as I know, there isn't a Yeti in Exolon, but I may well have missed it).

Personally I feel the only Destiny appropriate for this lot is a slap on the wrists and a short talk from Andrew Hewson. Sure, the game's technically fine, but it's hard to be really enthusiastic about such a slavish imitation■





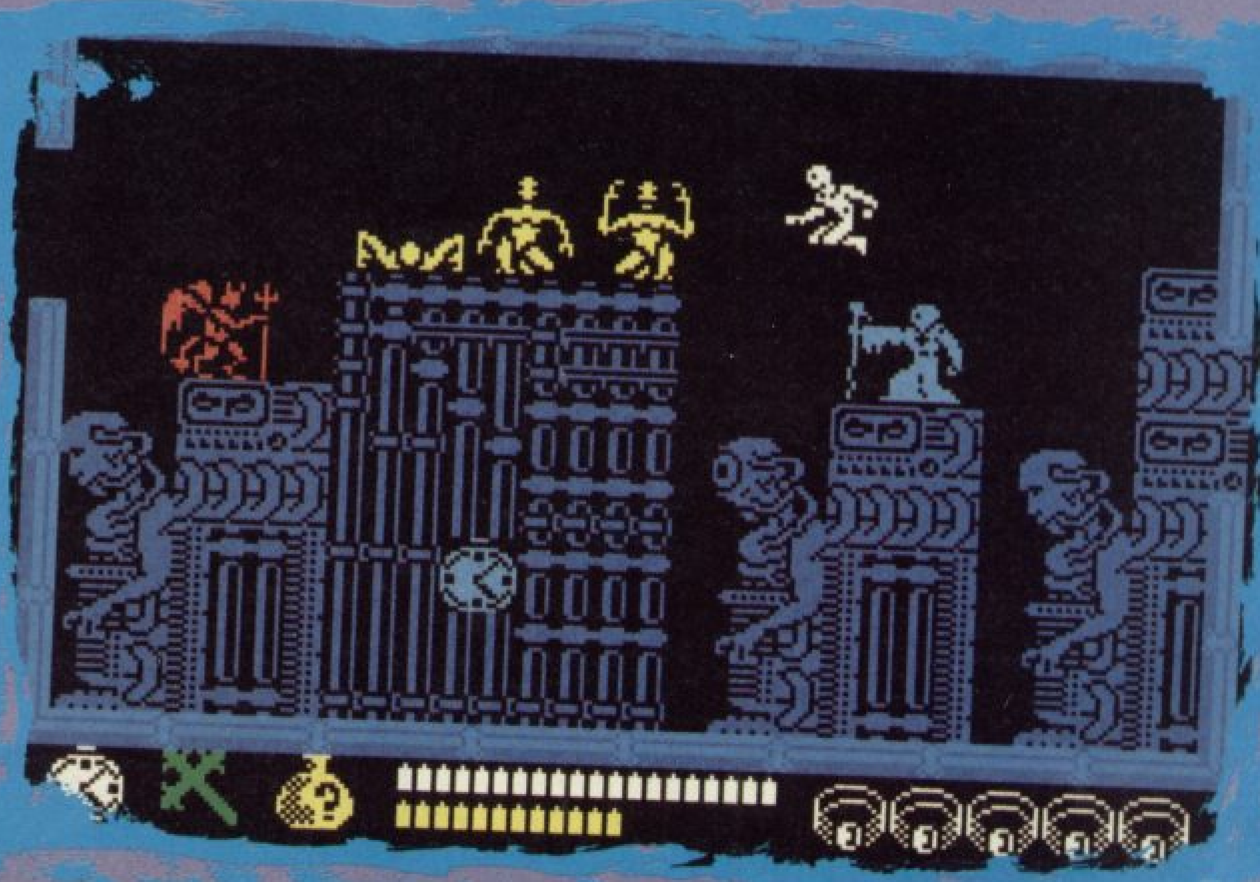


that this isn't the most exciting review in this month's issue, or indeed for several months' issues. The reason for this being that it's always difficult to whip up any enthusiasm for a game which is perfectly competently programmed, has pretty graphics and lots of gameplay, but not one jot of originality and no outstanding gimmicks. The most frightening thing about Frightmare is the price; it's certainly way better than the average budget game, but for £9.99 I certainly expect at least originality, excitement and, dare I say it? Superlative quality. Frightmare, sad to say, doesn't have it■

FAXBOX

Ghosts'n'Goblins derivative with a merely average scare-factor

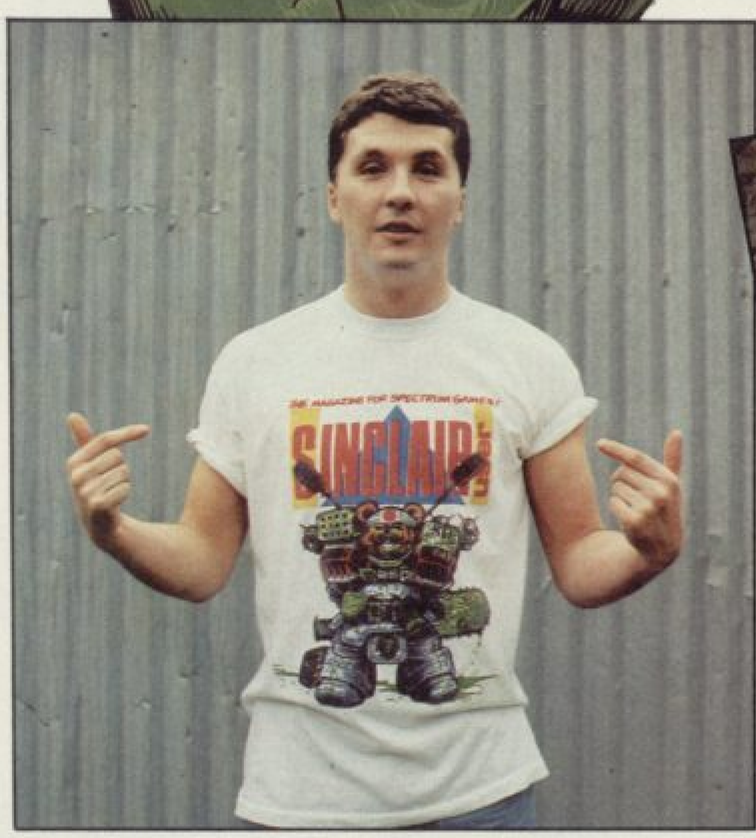
FRIGHTMARE
Label: Cascade
Author: Rod Ashley
Price: £9.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various
Reviewer: Chris Jenkins
★★★☆☆
★★★☆☆ 6

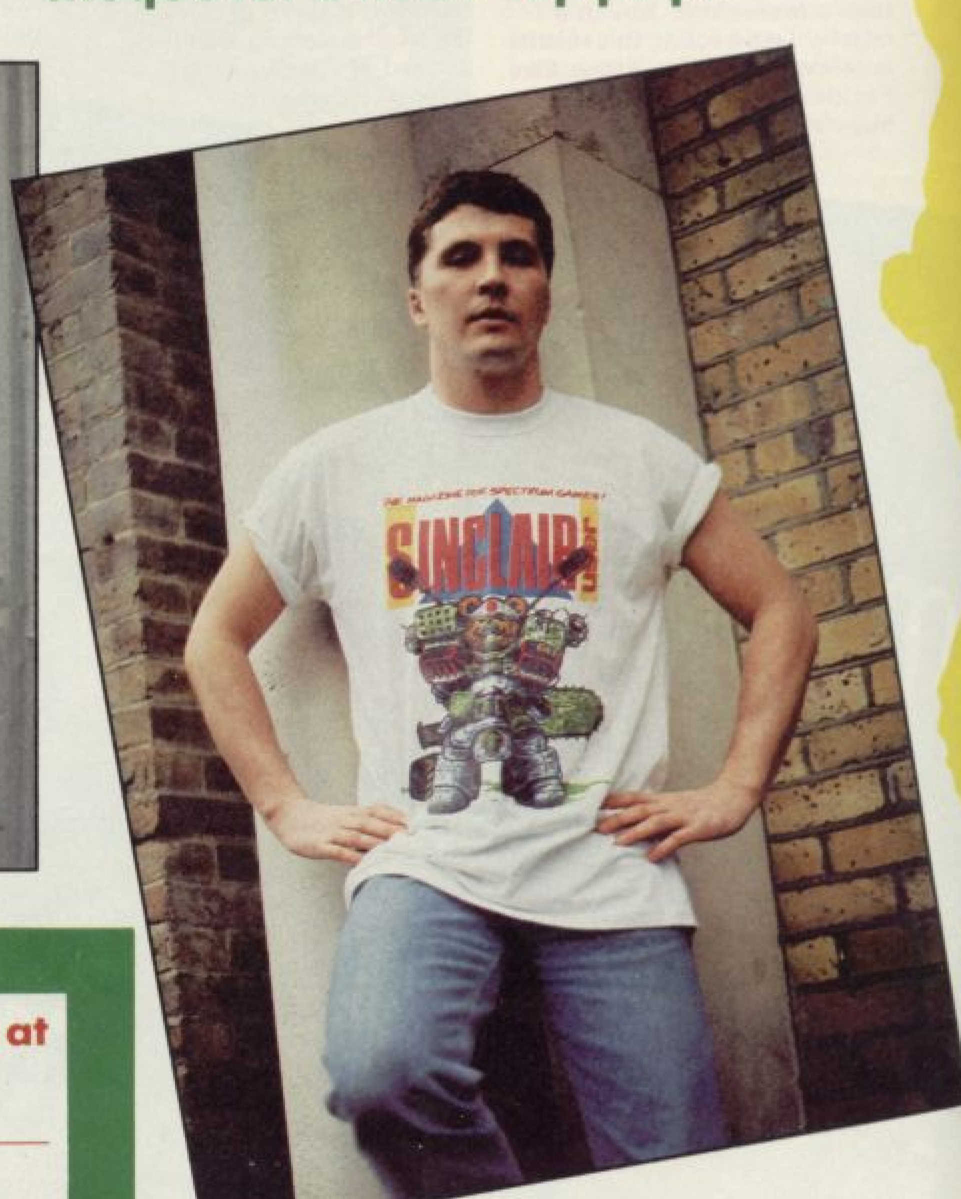


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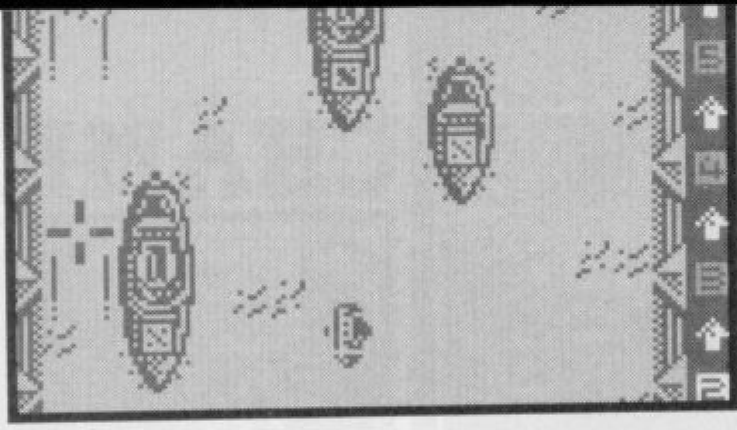
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If you don't, we'll just have to send the bears round!

ARCADE ★ REVIEW



Vertically scrolling arcade games. What call is there for them? We must have had enough of them in the past. We've had **Xevious, Terra Cresta, Commando** and a host of others. But **Xarax** is a bit special. For one thing it only costs £2.99.

Xarax is a vertically scrolling shoot and bomb 'em up in the

XARAX

FAXBOX

First class vertical scrolling shoot and bomb 'em up destined to be a hit. Better than many full price games around

XARAX
Label: Firebird
Author: R. Spahl and I. Gittelbauer
Price: £2.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various
Reviewer: Tony Dillon
★★★★☆ 8





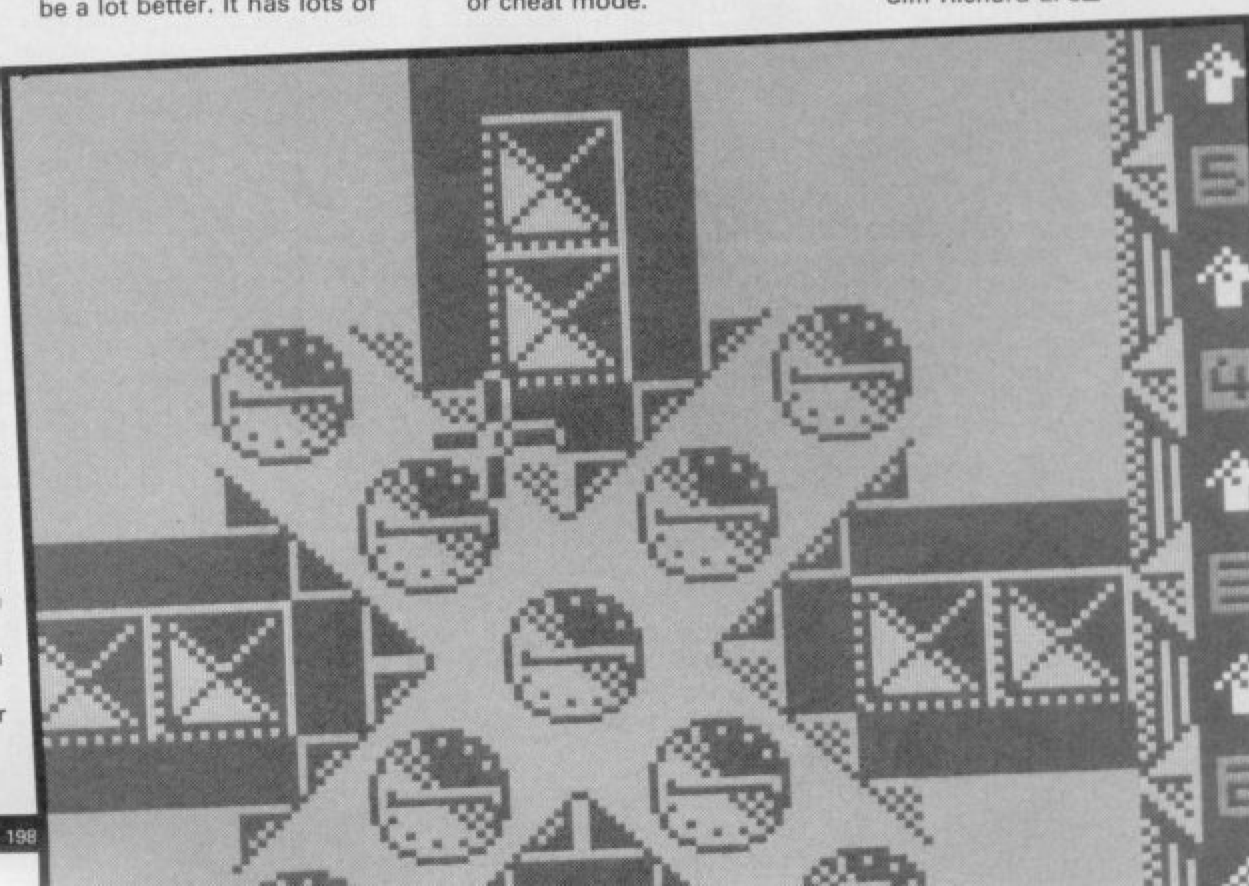
same guise as **Xevious** (get away). I say it's like **Xevious.** Well I'm lying. It is **Xevious**. In fact, it's a hell of a lot better than the official conversion of said game. You fly your little spaceship upwards over 7 levels of increasing difficulty. The backdrops to the levels differ greatly, so there is a lot of variety in the game. The first level alone is almost exactly the same as **Xevious,** you know what I mean – flying over a desert shooting flying discs and bombing pyramids and cannon installations, However things change.

The backdrops are very well laid out. They are designed in such a way that they provide a constant challenge (there are no 'safe bets'), keeping you on your toes, and it is well worth dying just to get your breath back.

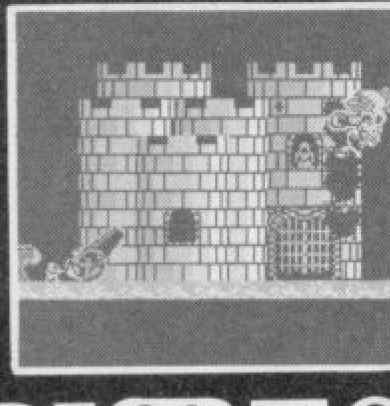
The aliens don't just come on fast, they stream on to the screen in waves of about 8 at a time, though with practice you learn where they tend to appear from and it is possible to destroy them as they come on to the screen.

The game is hard. It's very hard. It took me a very long time to get off level 1, but I persevered, and found level 2 to be a lot better. It has lots of ships in it, a la **Flying Shark,** which fire missiles and bullets at you in an alarming rate. I have yet to complete level 2, so there is plenty of challenge there, and a dire need for a poke or cheat mode.

There you have it. A **Xevious** clone that is actually better than **Xevious** itself. If it doesn't do well I'll eat my granny, her bathchair and her collection of Cliff Richard LPs■



ARCADE REVIEW



RAMPARTS

I love original ideas, and **Ramparts** has to have one of the most original gameplay ideas I've ever seen. You get to play a very large being who climbs up buildings, hitting them in order to knock huge holes in them, collecting food and picking up little folk and eating them . . . The only problem is – it's an original idea that's been done before. It's **Rampage,** innit? Yeah it is, though to be honest, it's not as good.

You play one of two knights, either Sir Griswold or Sir Larkin, verily two of the most enormous blokes in computerland. They weren't always giants though. In the beginning they were regular

FAXBOX

Graphically poor and vastly unplayable Rampage rip off. US Gold has done better

RAMPARTS
Label: Go!
Author: Future Concepts
Price: £8.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: Kempston

Reviewer: Tony Dillon

★★★☆☆ ★★☆☆☆ 5

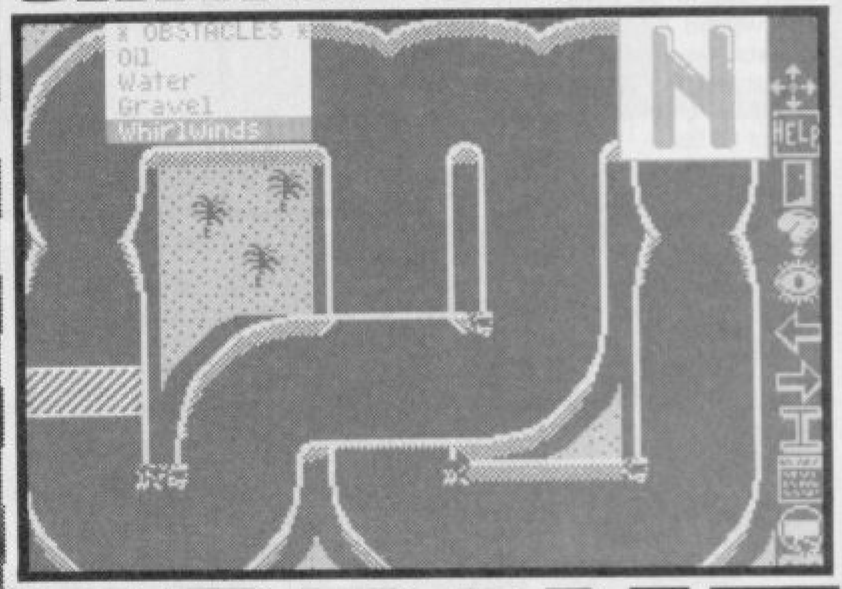


knights, but they were cursed and transformed into the huge Denis Roussofs they are now. In order to restore themselves to their former glory, they have to ravage all the castles in the land, and to ravage them, they have to climb up them and go boom-bang-a-bang (Norway – nil points) and knock them buildings down.

Guns, cannons and catapults bar your way, and are fired from windows and floor alike. You can of course just punch these to destroy them, but hits will reduce your energy. You can replenish said energy by eating the food that can be found in the windows, and believe you me there is a lot of it. In fact, so much that I got amazingly far into the game on my third go (just after you left, Dicky) and really the screens are very easy to do. Talking of screens, they're completely disgusting. The colour scheme used is so terrible you can't tell where separate towers begin and end.

In a nutshell, **Ramparts** is **Rampage** with Mediaeval knobs on, but **Rampage** is so much better■

CHAMPIONSHIP



SPRINT

Neeeeeeeooooooowwww! When you're an experienced Formula One racing driver like me, it's pretty tricky to find a race sim that offers any sort of challenge these days. Having finished **Outrun** in ten seconds, annihilated **Nigel Mansell's G.P.** in a mere moment, and complete every track in **Super Sprint** with no difficulty whatsoever, I was beginning to think that I'd never find a driving game to challenge me again (*Stop making things up, you idiot – Ed*).

Anyway, Electric Dreams – apparently stuck in sequel mode – is bringing out **Championship Sprint;** the sole difference between this and their earlier **Super Sprint** is the Course Construction aspect, so you'd have to be completely barmy to buy both.

What you've got to do is hare around a series of eight tracks as fast as possible, beating the "drone" (computer-controlled) cars and avoiding the oil patches. Sliding the little cars around the tracks is strangely satisfying, even though the graphics aren't up to much.

All the standard features

GRAND PR

The Summer days of Wimbledon are long over, but you can recapture all the thrills (except getting soaked) with MAD's **Grand Prix Tennis.** It's a one- or two-player game which very sensibly includes a full explanation of the rules of tennis, even down to the most obvious ("tennis is played between two players, one on each side of a net . . .").

FAXBOX

Cheap 'n' cheerful sports sim delivering a good dose of action for the money

GRAND PRIX TENNIS
Label: MAD
Author: Garry Hughes,
Price: £2.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Chris Jenkins

★★★★☆ ★★★☆☆ 7



STRATEGY SIMULATION REVIEW

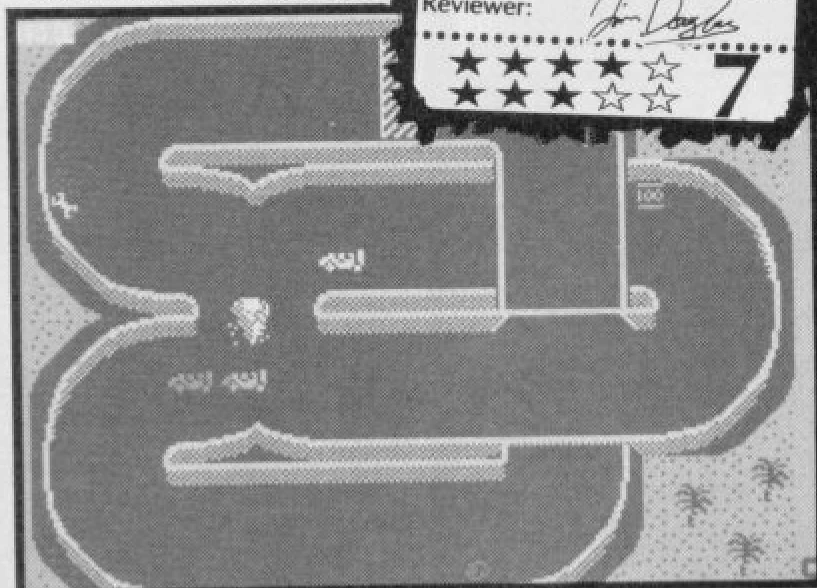
appear in the construction option. You can position your track anywhere on the screen and then cycle through all the possible road sections until you find a piece suitable for connection. You can, obviously, make your course as easy or difficult as you wish, before saving it to tape. The "racing" side of the tape can then be played, and your tracks loaded in and played.

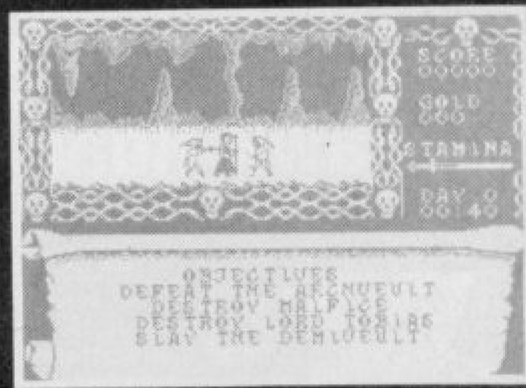
So, what's the verdict? It's a tight package. Well put together and easy to use. It's attractive to look at, too, but I wonder if people can really be persuaded to part with £10 when there are similar budget games around lacking only the course designer aspect. The resulting question is, is the track designer worth about £7?■

FAXBOX

Elegant though pricey pack and race game. Would have been better at £4.95 including editor

CHAMPIONSHIP SPRINT
Label: Electric Dreams
Author: Catalyst Coders
Price: £9.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various
Reviewer: Jim Douglas
★★★★☆ ★★★☆☆ 7



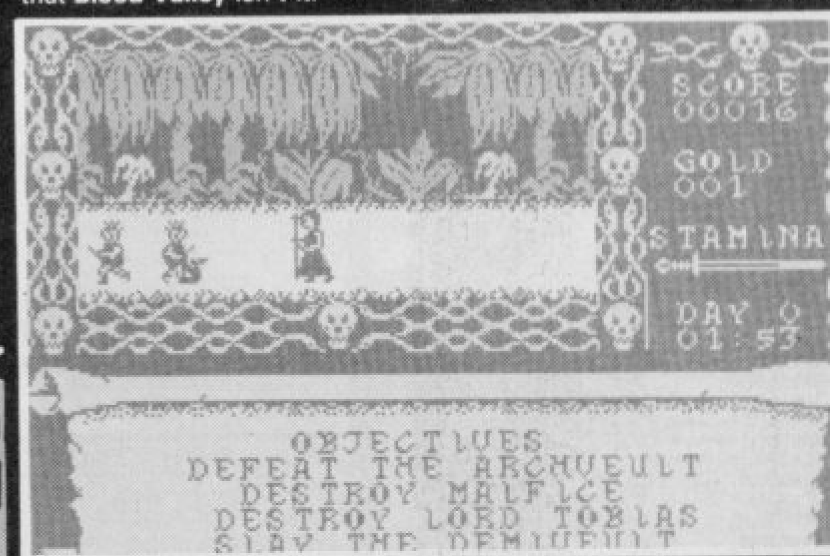


ARCADE REVIEW

BLOOD VALLEY

I like to imagine two sorts of games players – headbangers and strategists – as implacable enemies, facing each other across a yawning chasm lined with tons of software. "Mindless philistine!" cry the strategists, casting magic spells at their enemies. "Effete worms!" shout the shoot-'em-up fans, cocking their laser pistols. And so the two camps fight eternally.

Now, many software houses reckon that if they can produce a game which appeals to both camps, they'll clean up. A pity that **Blood Valley** isn't it.



Graphically disappointing and strategically shallow, **Blood Valley** is based on the *Duelmaster* fighting fantasy books. The main plot is based around a hunt, where the evil Archveult chases a lowly slave. Archveult has a series of allies throughout the valley, while the quarry (one of the three characters, barbarian, priest or thief) has magical potions, food and treasure hidden around the valley for collection.

At the bottom of the screen are shown the quarry's tasks, such as to slay certain characters, to steal certain objects or to destroy magical artefacts. There are one and two-player options; in the one-player game, you play the quarry. In the two-player game, the player acting as the Archveult gets to deploy his allies throughout a map of the valley before the game starts.

The big prob is that the graphics in the one or two player windows are pretty ploppy; the characters are represented by little black scribbles running and poking at each other with swords, and the background jump disconcertingly from one area to another. On the right hand side of the screens are the tallies of score, gold carried, stamina, and current time, all of which you have to keep an eye on, since there's a time limit to your quest to escape from the valley (or, in two-player mode, to hund down the quarry).

Blood Valley isn't bad in two-player mode, but in one-player mode it loses out tremendously in comparison to superior products like **Platoon.** I know the theme isn't that similar, but that's the wort of quality **Blood Valley** could have been, and dismally fails to achieve■

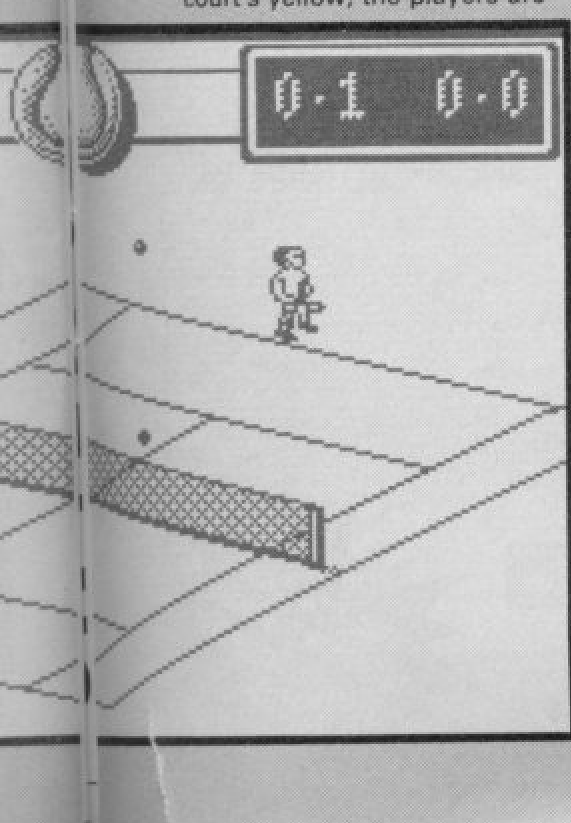
FAXBOX

Disappointing and shallow combination of combat and role-playing game scenarios

BLOOD VALLEY
Label: Gremlin
Authors: Martin Hooley
Price: £7.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various
Reviewer: Chris Jenkins
★★☆☆☆ ★☆☆☆☆ 3

RIX TENNIS

The screen design is fairly realistic, with an isometric view of the court and the umpire sitting on his little tower. The court's yellow, the players are black, the scores are at the top, and that's yer lot in terms of graphics.



As usual with this kind of game, the main skill is in timing and positioning your player. Serving is a bit of an effort; you hit the *Fire* button to throw the ball up, move the joystick to select the type of shot, and hit *Fire* again to shoot.

There are eight kinds of shot available: forehand, forehand lob, lob, backhand lob, backhand smash and smash. Your computer opponent masters these all with consummate ease; for you, things will be more difficult.

The movement of the characters is gratifyingly fast, the ball's motion is very realistic. Extra touches like the players dashing off for a sit down and a glass of Robinson's Barley water add to the atmosphere. Basically **Grand Prix Tennis** is very fast, requires a good deal of skill and reproduces most of the important features of the real game■

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PIXIES IN A BOX

Pixie-bashers everywhere will be pleased to see a veritable dungeon-ful of new releases from RPG (Role-Playing Game, dimbo) specialists **Games Workshop.** Fans of the fantasy scenario **Warhammer** will want to get their hands on the *Character Pack*, which includes rules for creating new characters, and fifty specially designed sheets to record all their most intimate details. Also new is *Griffin Island*, a companion volume to the **Runequest** scenario. This lavish hardback book features a colour map of the island, plus ten full-length adventure scenarios and hundreds of details of characters, monsters and places.

For miniature collectors (or even full-sized ones, ha-ha), there's the **Warhammer** *Fantasy Regiments* pack from Citadel Miniatures. Orcs, Dwarves, Elves, Skaven, Goblins and Dark Elves can all be yours for £9.99. If only lead alloy will satisfy you, try the *Devastors* pack. Designed for the **Warhammer** *40,000* future war scenario, this includes three battle machines; three Imperial Speeders, a two man gunship; the Mole Mortar, a fiendish underground rocket-launcher; and the Tarantula weapons system, a radio-controlled gun platform. Five operator figures are also included for your £9.99

For novice gamesters, the **Talisman** *Timescape* expansion set adds more locations, character cards and playing pieces for the popular fantasy board game.

For more details of these and oterh Games Workshop products, send an s.a.e to **Games Workshop, Chewton Street, Hilltop, Eastwood, Notts.**

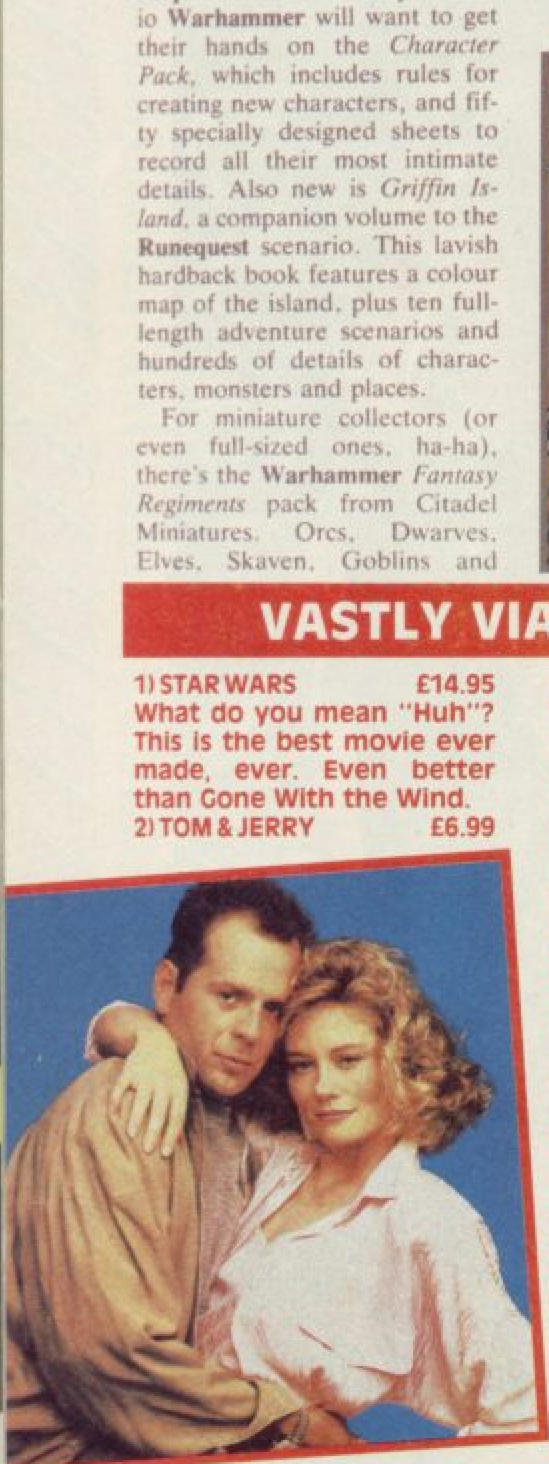
CHRIS JENKINS



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2) TOM & JERRY £6.99
More vintage ultra-violence from MGM's favourite sociopaths.



3) 48 HOURS £9.99
Eddie Murphy was great in his time, and this is right in the middle of his time.

4) GHOSTBUSTERS £9.99
I don't care if you recorded it over the Chrimbo period, buy it.

5) BEVERLY HILLS COP £9.99
Murphy stars as the super-cop who teaches Beverley Hills how to *really* police the city.

6) KISS EXPOSED £14.99
Well, I had to put them in, they're fab and the video has interviews, songs old and new and lots of women (or that's what the blurb says, anyway). What more could you ask for?

7) BROTHERS IN ARMS £9.99
Dire Straits are the second best Sheffield band around, second only to Def Leppard (Good God – Ed) and the video contains four tracks from their best album to date.

8) MOONLIGHTING £9.99
The feature length pilot episode. A lot better than most of the recent series.

9) MADONNA LIVE £11.99
Don't worry about her recent image, this video is taken from the Detroit concert during the Virgin Tour and, wow, is she hot.

10) THUNDERCATS HO! THE MOVIE £9.99
I'm not normally a fan of cartoons but the backdrops and the animation of TC far surpasses its rivals.

Chart compiled by Tony "Please can you stop inserting ridiculous comments etc" Dillon.



GOING

What is Labyrinthe? **Who is she? (Quit babbling and get on with it – Ed.)** Labyrinthe **is real life role play, in the genre of** Dungeons and Dragons, **set underground in a large area of caves.**

During my first session, my party and I had to recover 6 missing headbands for a wealthy merchant, for which he would pay us 100 Grulls (the Labyrinthe **currency) apiece. We played the whole adventure in one of the cave's 8 areas which, though small, took us almost 2 hours to navigate. It wasn't easy, due partly to the almost total lack of**



Six soaraway super saucy surprising sensuous

1 April Fools . . . only last until 12.00 midday. After that you're supposed to come clean. Famous April Fools have included the BBC programme about spaghetti farmers in central Europe, and the report in SU about the Sinclair Microlight aircraft project. Both seemed blummin' hilarious at the time, but obviously don't stand the test of time.

2 April showers . . . in the league table of wet months of the year, April actually comes out drier than most. April comes in at number four in the Least Rainy Charts, after February

LAÑDS



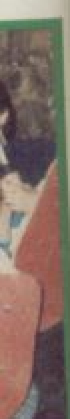
UNDER

light, and partly to the simple fact that . . . we were not alone. Hideous Orcs, Trolls and various forms of undead (ie Zobies) inhabit the caves and you're the prime ingredient of their favourite sandwiches. Played by regular adventurers, they leap from complete darkness, hit you violently (but painlessly) and then run away with ear-piercing shrieks. You, of course, must battle with them using the weapons supplied. These weapons are fantastic fun to use and perfectly safe. Made from a mixture of foam and tape, they're great for swinging and thrusting, and make combat almost real.

The game is rich with atmosphere and I think that this is what really made it for me. What a game, eh?

LABYRINTHE can be contacted by getting in touch with Garner Adventure Tours Ltd, 11 Greenacres Close, Farnborough, Kent BR6 7TS, or by ringing 0689 55851.

Tony "The Dork" Dillon



TOP 10 T-SHIRTS

1) Housemartins **£5.99**
The gruesome foursome's RIP testimonial T-shirt

2) Batman! **£5.99**
Na-na-na-na, na-na-na-naah! Choice of 2 – logos and portrait

3) Platoon **£5.99**
Olive drab Grunt's portrait from the hit 'Nam film.

4) Virgin **£3.99**
Had to be in there somewhere – tasteful logo, choice of colours.

5) Dennis the Menace **£6.99**
A small price to pay for a portrait of the Menace and Gnasher

6) Brute! **£5.99**
My head EXPLODED when I wore the T-SHIRT of the VIOLENT comic!

7) The Beatles **£5.99**
The other Fab Four. They still aren't reforming though.

8) The Mission **£5.99**
Gothic doom-rockers suddenly back in fashion.

9) U2 **£5.99**
The Joshua Tree – more moaning and lousy haircuts.



10) Michael Jackson **£6.99**
Bad? He's bloody terrible if you ask me.

All available from the clothing seciton of the Virgin Megastore

Chris Jenkins

SMALL CONSOLATION (!)



Remember how the Sega, Nintendo and Atari games systems were supposed to change the face of games computing? Well, what a load of codswallop. It appears that in the UK at any rate, people preferred to buy a real computer.

The Nintendo has done astonishingly well in Japan and the US, selling about 13 million in total, but came nowhere near Spectrum sales in Britain. Its importer Mattel has now handed over to NESI, with the intention of starting afresh with the Nintendo in the UK, and bringing some of the newer software over here.

Mastertronic has had more success with the Sega, which according to Tronic's Geoff Heath has outsold the Nintendo by about 5 to 1 in the UK. The Sega has the advantage of having Sega software available for it; thus the console version of Outrun has sold around 8,000 units and Afterburner will be released shortly.

Compared with Spectrum software however, the games cartridges are absurdly expensive, at between £20 and £30, and the range is tiny – there are only about 30 titles available for the Sega. And, of course, you can't Poke a console game.

CHRISTINA ERSKINE

THOROUGHLY RIDICULOUS HEADWEAR #1 (NOT A SERIES)

No doubt it's always been your ambition to be able to humiliate people you dislike with a single cool malevolent glance. Well now you can!

Glazers, from RTC, are the first in a series of water-based toys which bring a new dimension of hipness to the noble art of water fighting. **Glazers** are plastic moulded space-visors with adjustable headbands, supplied in pop colours including shocking pink, evil black and putrid yellow. Mounted between your eyes is a nozzle, from which leads a long tube to the pistol-style water tank.

The German-designed trigger pump shoots a powerful jet of water up to 30 feet, so all you have to do is look at your target and pump away for instant sploshy fun. Now no-one will dare to offend you, and you can walk the streets safe in the knowledge that anyone who steps out of line will get all wet.

Glazers cost £2.99 from toys stores including Toys'R'Us.

Chris Jenkins



ous stupendous shocking sexy SU facts about April

(average rainfall 28mm, March (average 35mm) and October (39mm). Average April rainfall is 42mm. Who'd have thought it?

3 April Love . . . is the name of a record by Pat Boone, which got to number seven in December 1957 despite being absolutely sickening.

4 April Ashley . . . used to be a man.

5 April sometimes has Easter in it.

6 April 5th . . . is Tombsweeping Day in Taiwan.

CHRISTINA ERSKINE

ARCADE REVIEW

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF THING



If there's one thing I maintain above anything else, it's that post people have balls. Not just puny little marbles, but massive black ones that jump up and down in full view of everyone. That's why I like **Thing**, because it shows everything that I believe in. Stop saying "oo-er" this is a seriously excellent game.

The **Thing** in question is a postperson (of indeterminate sex). No ordinary postperson, no, but a postperson with a very important letter to deliver. It's addressed to Lord Dingalinger and delivering it is no easy matter.

The big D has hidden himself away until our beloved hero completes 10 tasks. 10 whole tasks, I seem to hear you gasp incredulously, surely that's too much for one man/woman/thing? So, the lurvely people who run the Post Office has given he of the cutesy waddle a political advisor to help him who, as it happens, is a ball. Now no laughing, because this balls packs a mean gun. Why a gun for what sounds like basic postal duties?

Weeell, on the planet, 26 levels (one for every letter of the alphgabet, I'll explain later) there are various Dingalingers, which look like huge disembodied heads which fly at you and cause damage which naturally lose you a life, or in this case, time. You have a set time to deliver the letter or ol' LD won't show his face.

The key to solving this game is the tasks, of course, and the key to tasks is objects. **Thing** contains a lot of objects (**Thing** the game, not the person) which add up to quite a few tasks. What they all are exactly I cannot say (Softspeke translation – I dunno) but they usually involve a couple of objects and a little common sense.

Travelling around the 26 scrolling levels is no problem for a letter-worn postie like **Thing** aided, as he is, by his trusty telephone directory. Using that, in conjunction with the telephone boxes, that lie around, he can teleport simply by typing in a letter. That's why there are 26 levels. Told you I would explain, I always keep my promises, that's why the bear lets me stay.

This game is superior to nearly all budget *and* full price games currently around. **Magic Knight** was the king of budget arcade adventure until now, but thanks to the fantastically cute graphics held in this little bundle of cuteness, **Thing** reigns supreme. Take Berk, please, add Bub and Bob, give that cute smile and you have **Thing**. Large, well animated, Monochrome (that can't be helped) and lovable.

Not only do I give this game the Sinclair User Wassock, the Cheapo of the Month, Game of the Month and the Oscar for best supporting role, I also award it, the very first game to get it, The Dill Thrill. Well done to those nice people at Players■



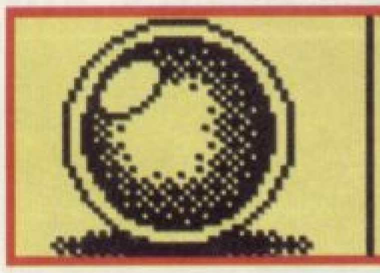
FAXBOX

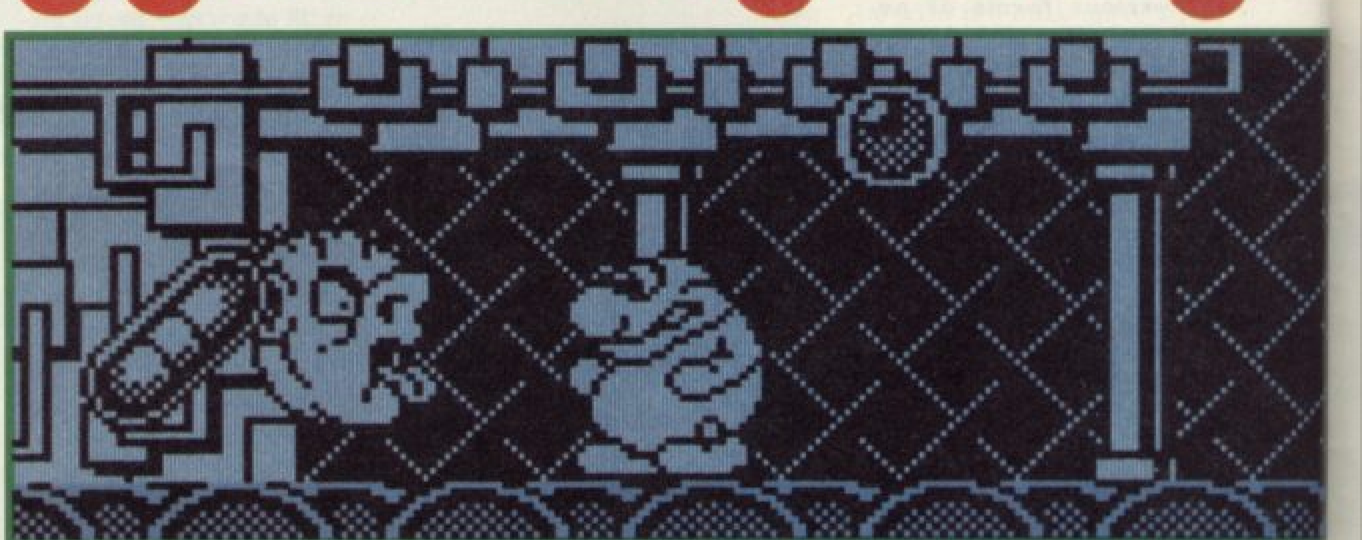
Wonderful Magic Knighty romp with the same sort of cutesy graphics and fabulous animation

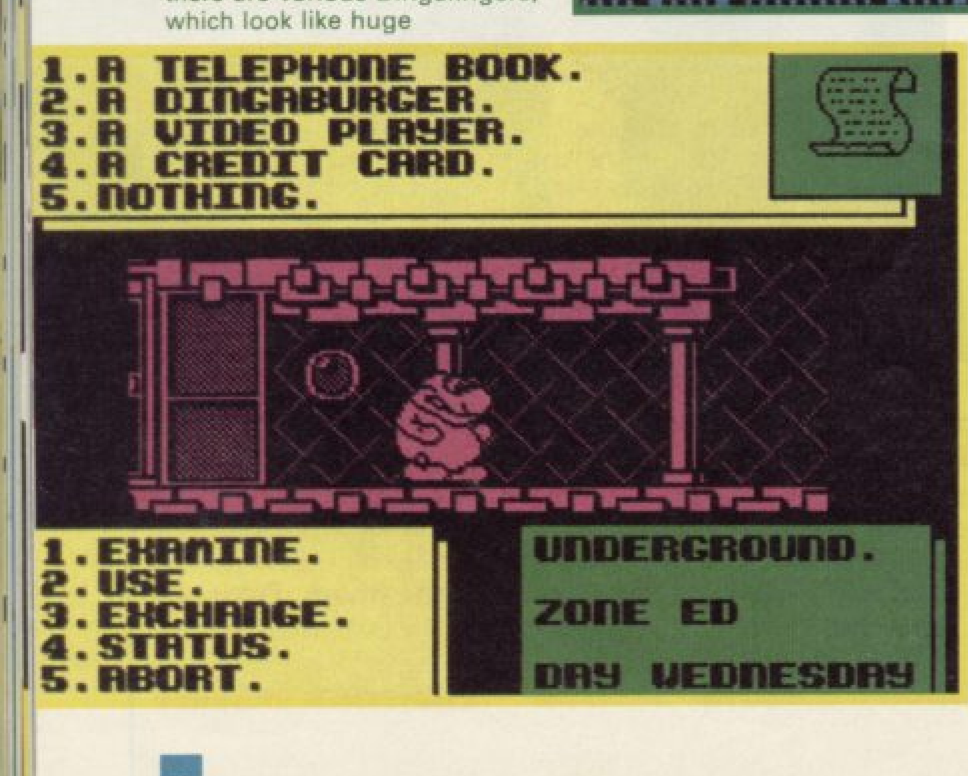
A DAY IN THE LIFE OF THE THING
Label: Players
Author: Colin Swinbourne
Price: £1.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Reviewer: Tony Dillon

★★★★★ ★★★★★ 10

CLASSIC







CODE TALK



Colin (left) demonstrates the slimming effect of vertical stripes . . .

COLIN GORDON

Ocean may well be basking in the glory of its Platoon **licence, but it's the boys from Choice Software who were responsible for all the clever programming. We thought it was time to give credit where credit is due. We flew out an undercover agent to Ireland to quiz Colin Gordon – the** Platoon **project leader – about what he *really* thought about world shaking issues like April Fool jokes and Mary Whitehouse . . .**

Pardon me ignorance, but the name *Choice* doesn't really ring any bells with me. How about a bit of background?

OK, well, we've done lots of Amstrad stuff, ***Daley Thompson*** *and things like that. We also did* ***Hardball*** *for Accolade and* ***California*** *and* ***World Games.***

Oh, bang goes the 'stunning newcomers shock' intro. What did you reckon on the film?

I thought it was OK, though a bit too anti-war for my liking. It wasn't really what I expected. To be honest, I'm more of a ***Robocop*** *sort of person.*

An action-excitement freak, eh? Bet you're a pain to be around on April 1st. Have you planned any good gags this year?

Not so far. The best one I ever did was on one of our programmers. One of the guys had been working for weeks to try and get this bug out of a program he'd written. So one night we crept into his room and tampered with his code. We changed the interrupt routine so every few seconds the game would just stop. We left him all day trying to sort it out. It was pretty funny.

That's bordering on mental torture, isn't it? Well, let's not dwell. Are you a fan of the movies as a rule?

Well, I'm more inclined to get out a video than go to the cinema, but yes, I do enjoy them.

> **Top Five Films**
>
> *Robocop*
> *Lethal Weapon*
> *Short Circuit*
> *Predator*
> *Commando*

Software companies are always moaning about the difficulties they have when organising a licence. Did you have any difficulties getting stuff for *Platoon* approved?

Not really. For the most part they were pretty good. They didn't insist that the characters looked a particular way or anything. We had quite a lot of freedom.

Have you got any particular culinary tastes?

I like Italian food at the moment. Pizzas and all that. I'm not so keen on fish at all. Drink-wise I like Corrs, which is an American beer. I can't stand Guinness. Horrible, dark stuff.

Is there anyone you admire?

That's tricky. I don't think there's anyone that I admire, as such. I quite envy people with stacks of money. No, maybe envy is the wrong word. I don't begrudge them it, but I wish I had it instead!

What sort of magazines do you read? Not Tatler, I presume?

No. I try to steer clear of computer magazines except for a brief glance, so I tend to read science fiction and wargaming mags.

How did you get started on this programming lark?

Like everyone else; with a ZX81 from Radio Shack, just for curiosity's sake.

There must be a certain degree of prestige to be had from converting such a big licence. How did you come to do the coding?

Well, there wasn't really any competition, as far as I could tell. Ocean *were quite impressed with our work on* ***Mutants,*** *and so when* ***Platoon*** *came along, they offered it to us.*

How many more films do you think can be milked from the Vietnam thing?

Lots, I hope. I can't see them ever stopping. There are so many possible points of view to put across. I haven't seen the Robin Williams one, ***Good Morning Vietnam,*** *though. It didn't really appeal that much.*

What were you particularly good or bad at at school?

I was pretty good at Maths, but hopeless at English. I hated all forms of sport, too.

Are you still as unkeen on physical exertion?

Well I referee American Football matches now, actually. It can be pretty hairy when you've got ten guys, all much bigger than you trying to persuade you to change your decision.

Who's your least favourite person in the world?

Got to be Mary Whitehouse. She was responsible for taking ***Miami Vice*** *off the air.*

> **Staying with TV. What's your favourite advert?**
>
> *The* Heinz Beans *one with Margaret Thatcher. That's great.*

Welcome to H.T.H. Welcome to a special "all stars" edition – in which well known megastars pass on their wisdom.

Thanks then to Damien Scattergood who's contributed the

HOW

... DO YOU SCROLL THE SCREEN REALLY

This is from John Wildsmith:

It is a common misconception that scrolling a Spectrum screen horizontally in a game actually involves scrolling the screen memory. While you can do it this way, what actually happens is that you get so many ripples down the screen it's like looking at a picture reflected in a duck pond. This is because the up-date is too slow.

A faster and much more efficient way is to store all of your graphics pre-rotated into all the necessary positions and bang 'em on the screen as quickly as possible. For example, if you wanted your background to appear to move 2 pixels at a time you would store 4 versions of each graphic block where each is offset by 2 pixels from the last ie, 0, 2, 4 and 6 pixels. While this is a good deal more wasteful of memory than a simple screen scroll routine it does have the advantage of being damn quick.

Obviously a 16*16 pixel graphic block needs to be scrolled into a 24*16 pixel block for it all to fit. If you have a background made up of these blocks, in order for them to combine they must be "OR"ed together at the edges, and it usually helps to have a strip of black ink and black paper attributes down the edge of the screen so you don't see the ragged edges. However, if you can spare the space and time it's quite easy to clip the blocks to form a neat edge.

The fastest way to do the whole job is to store all the screen data addresses in a huge table, so that you can get at them easily, wait for frame flyback (by doing a HALT), and put everything on as quickly as possible. This is known as 'chasing the raster'. Probably the fastest way to do the actual writing to the screen is to move the stack pointer to the start of your table and "POP" the values off it, having disabled interrupts first, although this does mean intermingling your screen addresses and data addresses.

Have a look at figure 4 to get an idea of the code required. Two screen addresses are used, one for the top 3

Figure 4. A sample routine to scroll the Spectrum screen

```
DW graphic, screen address1, screen address2
START   DI                  ; we don't want interrupts
                            upsetting the stack
        LD (SPMOD+1), SP    ; store the stack pointer for later
        LD SP, TABLE 1      ; point it at our table
        POP HL              ; get the address of the graphic
        POP DE              ; get the screen address to dump it
                            at
        LD B, E

        LD A, (DE)          ;
        OR (HL)             ;
        LD (DE), A          ;
        INC L               ; do this 8 times
        INC E               ;
        LDI                 ;
```

... DO YOU GUYS GET SUCH FAST WAYS OF

A question from John Oliver of Melbourne.

Over to Damien Scattergood:

There are in fact quite a few ways to read the keyboard. The simplest way is to use the Rom routines to read the keyboard but the routines are inevitably slow in execution and, of course, you cannot adapt them to your own purposes. The quickest and most efficient way of creating a keyboard reading routine is to scan the keyboard directly.

The Spectrum keyboard is made up of 40 basic keys. The map of these 40 keys is 8 blocks of 5 keys each. Each block signifies a section of the keyboard such as 'Qwert'. To test a section of the keyboard we must send out the address of the scan block on the address bus and then read in the returned value on the data bus. If a key was pressed then the returned value will have changed.

To test exactly which key in that scan block was pressed you must test for the specific bit in the returned byte. The value to test against is the keycode. The full list of scan block and keycodes is listed in figure 1.

Figure 1. The Spectrum keyboard map. For example key "R" is in scan block 251 with keycode 8.

Keyboard map						Scan block code
	V	C	X	Z	SHIFT	254
	G	F	D	S.	A	253
	T	R	E	W	Q	251
	5	4	3	2	1	247
	6	7	8	9	0	239
	Y	U	I	O	P	223
	H	J	K	L	ENTER	191
	B	N	M	SS	SPACE	127
KEYCODES	16	8	4	2	1	

Load A with the scan block value and do an *In* instruction from port 254. This puts the block vlue in A. Now *And* with the keycode, and if the result is zero the key was pressed.

For example to test the "X" key our code fragment would be

```
LD A, 254
IN A, (254)
AND 4
JP 2, 'X'PRESSED
```

To generate a routine to read a specific number of keys for a game we would need a table of values to store all the keys we want to test. To simplify things it would be better if we could store the address of the function we wanted to execute on the keypress as well. This simplifies our program table as it would look like *SCAN CODE, KEY CODE, FUNCTION* for all the keys we wanted to execute/read.

Next we need a program to skip through this table to test all the keys. It is probably best if you use HL as a pointer to the table. To read the first key we then only need to do a LD A, (HL) followed by an IN A, (254). We then increment the HL register to point to the keycode and use AND (HL). Thus our first key has been tested.

If the key was not pressed we simply move on to the next key. If it was however we have to pick up the program address to execute. The address we place into HL and then we do a JP (HL) to do a direct jump to the function. When the called routine returns it will return to the function which called the key reading function. An example of this sort of program is shown in figure 2.

To scan the keys for our game all that is needed is to call the key read function when required. The major advantage of using this technique is that it is easy to add more keys or to change the keys we require to

(Andrew Hewson

piece about reading the Spectrum keyboard. Thanks also to John Wildsmith who is currently converting our Rack It release, **Battle Valley,** to the Speccy. John's speciality is scrolling (you wait 'til you see **BV**) so that's what he's writing about.

THE HELL!!!

LY FAST?

characters and one for the bottom 3 characters to speed things up. If you make you table large enough to handle the area you want to work on and expand the routine in figure 4 you can bung 2/3 of the screen on in 1/50 of a second. In the successive program cycles use the next stage

```
        LD E, B          ;
        INC D            ;

        POP DE
        LD B, E

        LD A, (DE)       ;
        OR (HL)          ;
        LD (DE), A       ;
        INC L            ; do this 8 times
        INC E            ;
        LDI              ;
        LD E, B          ;
        INC D            ;
SPMOD   LD SP, #0000     ; restore the stack pointer to its
                           old value
        EI
```

of rotated graphic blocks until you have stepped through a whole byte. Then just go back to your un-rotated blocks and dump them on the screen a byte further along. Thus you can continually step through your map of graphics in either direction.

Using this method the background effectively becomes a big sprite that animates. Any part of your background that need to animate can be taken care of simply by altering the respective block in your map (eg, doors, exploding blocks). No need to grab backgrounds for any sprites that overlap this section on the screen either because you are constantly rewriting it over anything that was there beforehand.

There are a lot of variations on this method depending on the size of the playing area to be scrolled and how long the rest of the program takes to execute but this is probably the fastest way.

Vertical scrolling on the Spectrum with its three sections of screen memory can be a real pain. This is mainly due to the fact that the sections of screen don't follow on neatly from each other for scrolling purposes. You could scroll the data on screen but it's messy and consequently slow. However, if you use a second screen (a back screen), create the initial picture and copy it to the front screen, then to create the scrolling image you just take data from further up/down the back screen and wrap round to the other extreme of this screen. Update the back screen just above where you're taking the picture from and the new data will be added to the top/bottom of the display. Downloading the back screen to the front screen can be achieved very quickly and only a small section of the back screen data needs up-dating.

A similar method can be used for horizontal scrolling but it's not as fast as the first method described.

A lot of people moan about the way the Spectrum screen is laid out, but when you've got to move around it fast it turns out to be a damn good layout, so get writing those mega-smooth and fast 4 way scrolling shoot 'em ups!

JOHN WILDSMITH

OF READING THE KEYBOARD IN YOUR GAMES?

Figure 2. A keyboard scanning routine which reads any one of 5 keys. The scan block code, keycode and function identifier for each are held in "TABLE" only part of which is shown here

```
KEY READ:   LD B, 5          ; 5 keys to read
            LD HL, TABLE
KEY LOOP:   LD A, (hl)       ; scan code
            IN A, (254)      ; test key
INC HL
            AND (HL)         ; key code
            INC HL
            JR NZ, NO PRESS
            LD E, (HL)       ; get function
            INC HL           ; address
            LD D, (HL)
            EX DE, HL        ; place in HL
            JP (HL)          ; jump to the function
NO PRESS:   INC HL
            INC HL
            DJNZ KEYLOOP
            RET
TABLE:      DEFB 253, 1      ; 'A'
            DEFW GOUP
            DEFB 251, 1      ; 'Q'
            DEFW GO DOWN
            .
            .
            REST OF KEYS
COUP:       ; GO UP FUNCTION
            .
            .
            .
            RET
—           OTHER ROUTINES
```

be tested.

There is one value left out of the scan code table in figure 1. This is 0. If A is loaded with 0 then the whole keyboard is read. However, if a key is pressed we cannot distinguish which part of the keyboard was pressed. Although this might seem useless it can be put to good effect in a "pause 0" or "wait for a key press" routine.

Figure 3
Demo

```
 10 CLEAR 29999
 20 FOR F = 0 TO 73: READ A
 30 POKE 30000 + F, A: NEXT F
 40 RANDOMSE USR 3000
 50 DATA 62, 2, 205, 1, 22 205, 59
 60 DATA 117, 195, 53, 117, 6 5, 33
 70 DATA 82, 117, 126, 219, 254, 35
 80 DATA 166, 35, 32, 5, 94, 36, 86
 90 DATA 235, 233, 35, 35, 16, 239
100 DATA 201, 251, 1, 102, 117, 253
110 DATA 1, 106, 117, 223, 2, 114
120 DATA 117, 223, 1, 110, 117, 127
130 DATA 1, 118, 117, 62, 85, 215
140 DATA 201, 62, 215, 201
150 DATA 62, 82, 215, 201, 62, 76
160 DATA 215, 201, 62, 88, 215, 201
```

The code for a complete routine to wait for a key press would be

```
LD A, 0                    ; all
keyboard
PAUSE:  IN A, (254)
        CPL
        AND 31    ; test bits
        JP NZ, OK ; exit if key
        pressed
        JP PAUSE
OK:     .    .
        .
        .
        REST OF CODE
```

Finally, figure 3 contains an example program written in Basic for reading the keyboard based on the method listed in figure 2. The keys it uses O-P, Q-A, and SPACE. It will print the letters L, R, U, D and X when the keys are pressed.

DAMIEN SCATTERGOOD

Next month I'm pulling in a couple more ace programmers with their tips. In the meantime – keep sending those letters. Bye!!!

n has the answer)

Gizmo gone bonkers? Can't get your thingy connected? Don't be afraid to tell us . . .

I'VE GOT THIS PROBLEM

I'VE GOT THIS PROBLEM

. . . WITH INTERFERENCE FROM MY JOYSTICK (OO-ER) . . .

WHEN I connect my Bud Interstate 31 joystick to the back of my Rotronics Wafadrive it won't work until I initialise it. Why is this?

Also do all games work with a Multiface 1? I'd like to buy one, but only if it works.

Andrew Kidger
Bassingfield
Nottingham

● ***The Wafadrive's internal workings (getting technical here) use the same addressing as the interstate, and so it's by no means sure which of the two add-ons will respond to an IN 31 command, the command games use to read a joystick. Once you've initialised the unit the circuitry is set up to allow another add-on (like the Bud) to work properly.***

The battle between games writers and Multiface One is, as they say in the US of A, an ongoing confrontational situation. Every so often, somebody writes a game which tries to spot any Multiface connected and then not run; then Romantic Robot modifies the software so that the countermeasure doesn't work.

. . . WITH MY BROTHER . . .

MY Brother HR5 printer (RS232 version) is connected to my Spectrum 128 via the RS232 socket using an RS232 lead.

Are they compatible? If they are, how do I get them to work? Should I have the Brother set to 7 or 8 bits? And, what does that mean, anyway?

Mike de Wenk
Amsterdam
Holland

● *Yes, they are all compatible. You will have to set your Brother to the following magic numbers by the Dip switches inside your printer. The speed at which the Spectrum operates is 9600 baud (that's bits of information per second). It uses 8 bits, as opposed to 7. RS232 sends information one bit at a time. As the computer holds characters in sets of eight bits, it has to send them out in a group, so that the printer knows when a new character starts and when it's finished. You'll also have to set the printer to one stop bit, and no parity — more stuff to make sure that the Spectrum and the printer agree on when a character has been sent correctly.*

. . . WITH MY TAPE RECORDER . . .

MY recently purchased +2 is great. The only thing wrong with it is that it doesn't have a tape recorder volume control. Can one be fitted DIY?

Jamie Hughes
Clywd
N Wales

● ***No, and you shouldn't need one. The cassette circuitry of the +2 is basically digital, in that it amplifies the signal from the tape to such an extent that it is either high or low, with no levels in between. With an ordinary tape recorder, you need a volume control to set this up properly; with the + 2 it's automatic. Any tapes which they don't load are probably recorded badly.***

. . . WITH MY MULTIFACE . . .

WOULD it be possible to add a Microdrive to my Spectrum 128 using the RS232 port or must I buy an Interface 1. My two other peripherals are a Ram Turbo Port Interface and a Multiface 128 with Genie. On the adverts for the Multiface it says tape/disc/wafer/cartridge is this the cartridges that go in the Ram Turbo or the microdrive ones?

Finally is it possible to put Interface 2 cartridges in the Ram Turbo?

P Topham
Crawley
West Sussex

● ***To answer your questions bit by bit:***
You will need to get an Interface One to use Microdrives and plugging them into the RS232 will produce zilch.
Interface 1 has a through port so there shouldn't be any problem linking all the things you have together.
The cartridges I think you mean were the original ones produced by Sinclair designed to be used with the Interface 2. I think only half a dozen of so bits of software were ever produced in this format though if you can find them they should work with the Ram Turbo.

. . . WITH BLOWING MY EPROMS . . .

CAN I find an EPROM blower available for the Spectrum? If there is, can it do the following: blow Basic into EPROM, leave 48K free for programs, be accessible from Basic, make independent Rom cartridges, be compatible with Microdrives?

Pete Johnson
Dunfermline
Fife

● ***Your best bet would be to get a blower which uses RS232. Most of them do, and most of them cost significant money. The cheapest I can find is well over £300. It's much cheaper to build one yourself, unless anyone out there knows better?***

When you do produce an EPROM, you can use it as an ordinary ROM providing you make sure that the Profram ***line on the chip is connected according to specification. On the Spectrum 48K circuit board it isn't, but on the 128 and all following Spectra you can plug in an EPROM without worry. But any EPROMs you plug in have to be totally self-contained — they can't call any routines from the Basic Rom. As for blowing Basic on to a chip, with an RS232 blower it would be a simple matter of*** Peeking ***the existing Rom into Ram, making any mods you wanted to and blowing it out your RS232. But any EpRoms you cook up like this can't be given to anybody else because of copyright.***

Finally, if you want to mess around with driving hardware with homegrown Roms, I recommend the book The Spectrum Hardware Manual, ***from Melbourne House.***

. . . WITH PANASONIC . . .

HOW can I use my Spectrum 128K+2 with an RS232 to Centronics converter and Seikosha GP100A printer? If I buy a parallel interface (or a Disciple), will the GP100A work properly?

D C Fearns
Tickhill
Doncaster

● *You might think that one Centronics interface is the same as another, after all it is supposed to be a standard. But, alas, the specification allows for a little leeway in things like voltages and signal timings. The Seikosha expects the signals to be as slow as the specification says they can be, and your parallel converter probably provides them as fast as the specification permits. Result — the GP100A doesn't work, despite all the gear working fine separately.*

However, I have seen that printer work with a Disciple, so I'm confident that you won't have the same problem there.

If you've got a tricky hardware problem, no matter how personal, write to: Dr Rupe, Sinclair User, Priory Ct, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AM.

(but Dr. Rupe has the answer)

(but Dr. Rupe has the answer)


CROSSWIZE
Suit up, grab your turbo laser, sling on your jet-pack and get ready for the ride of your life. It's here, the eagerly awaited sequel to that arcade classic Sidewize.
Crosswize — it'll blow your space boots off!
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Side Arms

Sideways scrollers have been hugely successful in the arcades, with **Nemesis** probably being the most popular. **Side Arms** takes the idea of sideways scrolling and makes it just that little bit more exciting. Taking the role of Lieutenant Henry, or, if you are playing with a friend, Sergeant Chanders, you fly to save the Earth from the dreaded force of Bozon.

Unadulterated violence is all well and good, but one puny little laser isn't going to have much affect in the long run. So, just to make the game a little more enjoyable, various upgrades are offered when you shoot special nasties. Things like fan lasers, and extra wonderful mega-bazooka-launchers. Simple things like speed up and speed down exist also, just for those **Nemesis** traditionalists.

The aliens come thick and fast and some of them are real nasty beggars. The graphics on this game are breathtaking in places. You are wonderfully depicted, but the nasties are the best part of the game.

Side Arms is good technically. Graphics, sound and playability are all there, though it is a little hard in places. Probably OK for when you've got a little time to kill, but I don't think I'll go looking for it■

FAXBOX

Great graphics, neat sound may be a bit tricky
Manufacturer: **CapCom**
Difficulty Level: **9**
Graphics: **9**
Sound: **8**
Addictiveness: **8**
OVERALL RATING **8**

Lock-On

Adrift in the ocean of 3-D coin-ops came the hugely underrated **Lock On.** While most of the machines – **After Burner, Thunder Blade** etc – placed you in the bizarre position of viewing your aircraft at the front of the play-area, Tatsumi s game boasts far more realism.

The screen is simply the view out of your cockpit, which scrolls around to follow the movements you make with the semi-circular joystick affair. In the centre of the screen is your targetting system.

The bad guys come at you from start to finish. In the first place it's not too bad, but just as soon as you've got the hang of hauling the aircraft around, all hell breaks loose.

Fighters scream out of the sun at you, firing huge red missiles straight at your head. You can dodge or shoot these down, but whatever you do, never let them out of your sight.

The graphics throughout are fantastic, and the action is scarey enough to get the adrenalin going, without being so difficult as to put you off.



For my money, **Lock On** beats **After Burner** any day, although there isn't the novelty value of a cockpit shaking itself to bits every time you hit something thanks to expensive hydraulics, it's still a whole lot more exciting■

FAXBOX

Brilliant 3-D coin-op beats After Burner hands down
Manufacturer: **Tatsumi**
Difficulty Level: **8**
Graphics: **9**
Sound: **7**
Addictiveness: **9**
OVERALL RATING **9**

You know, they may be no substitute for a 48K, but let's face it, there are a few Coin-Ops that are worth the odd ten pence or two. In this new regular feature we're going to take a look at the latest and hottest Coin-Ops and give you our opinion. To kick off with though we're going to take a quick look at

After Burner

Why, oh, why, when the enemy are producing swarms of supersonic fighters like they're going out of fashion, do we only ever have one little jet and a third rate pilot to protect ourselves from invasion?

That done-to-death storyline is the one behind ***After Burner****, possibly the most impressive to look at coin-op since* ***Space Harrier.***

I have a sneaking suspicion, actually, that ***After Burner*** *is merely* ***Space Harrier*** *with planes in the first place. Yet again, you're stuffed into an hydraulically operated cabinet that rolls you around the place like a bucking bronco, inviting you to, "feel that G-Force." Fiddlesticks. What G-Force? You're rolling about in a cabinet.*

No, I'm not a big fan of ***After Burner,*** *although I'm quite willing to concede that I'm very much in the minority. Gameplay is fast and furious, with wave after wave of sophisticated jets swooping over, and crashing towards the ground trailing bright orange smoke and flames.*

And of course, there's all that rolling around when you're playing in the sit-in cabinet.

It's pretty to look at, the action is non-stop, and it's outrageously expensive wherever you go. If you

FAXBOX

Spectacular to look at plane blast, a little reminiscent of Space Harrier
Manufacturer: **Sega**
Difficulty Level: **8**
Graphics: **9**
Sound: **8**
Addictiveness: **6**
OVERALL RATING **8**



OPS

some of the best Coin-Ops of the past year just to show you what you're missing, if you haven't played them yet. We're also including a couple of games that have just (or soon will be) converted to the Spectrum so you know what it's supposed to look like. (All ratings are out of 10)



fancy popping of a few dozen enemy jets in your spare time, you'll have great fun with ***After Burner.*** *If, on the other hand, like me, you resent paying a quid for the privilege of playing* ***Space Harrier*** *with knobs on you're going to be justifiably miffed*■



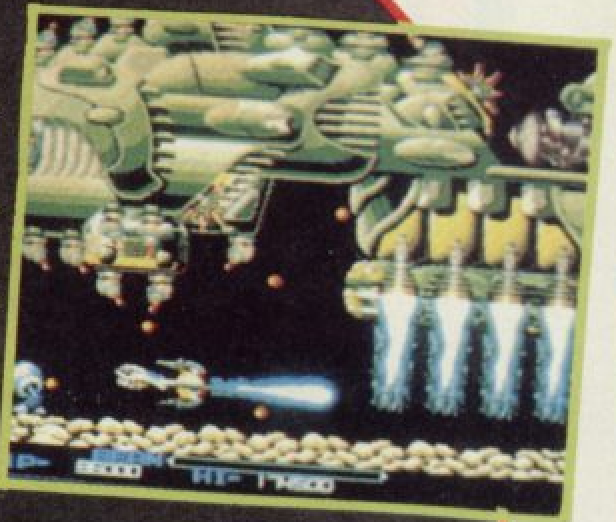
R-Type

Apart from the Sega licences, Iren's **R-Type** was probably the most talked about arcade game of 1987 for its amazing graphics and its exciting gameplay.

You pilot a lone spacecraft through 8 tortuous levels along caverns and metallic tunnels, around huge spaceships and underwater scenes. The graphics are, as they were promised to be, breathtaking. The whole look of the game easily beats games like **Wardner** and **Double Dragon** for quality of graphics. The metal areas look like real metal, the underwater scene looks very wet. My personal favourite is the level where you have to destroy the very large hsip by blowing up a small section at a time. The graphics are fantastic and the jet engines positioned around this mother ship have to be seen to be believed.

R-Type is a very playable game, it's not too hard, yet it still provides a challenge. After about 4 tries I got to level 2, and I'm not very good at arcade games, so maybe you arcade experts out there should give this a go.

Nearly everyone I know says it's the best thing since sliced bread, and although I know what they mean in terms of the graphics, sound, I still can't really see where the attraction lies. Though it may look new, it's a format that has been used before and I think any magic it may have first time has died and gone for good■



FAXBOX

Technically superb but it leaves me cold, though zillions disagree

Playability: 9
Graphics: 9
Sound: 8
Addictiveness: 7

OVERALL RATING **7**

Soldier of Light

Stop trying to say it in the original Japanese, **Xain'd Sleena** is better known over here as **Soldier of Light,** and is soon to be released on the Spectrum by *Softek*.

Soldier of Light is one of those multiple mission, multiple enemy sort of coin-ops that involves one lone spaceman in a ridiculous suit and some pretty hair raising opponents.

The opening title sequence will invite you to Choose Your Mission, the charmingly simple task of pointing your spaceship at one of the planets on show and pressing 'Go'. Different planets have, of course, different properties, and different opponents, and not surprisingly, they come in differing degrees of difficulty. Watch out in particular for the Water Planet, which is infested with enormous dragonflies and water monsters.

Soldier of Light ranges from being pretty tricky to downright impossible, and simply because of this it usually works out as being quite expensive. One go is simply never enough if you're going to defeat that particularly large dragon, and besides, once you've worked your way through all the planets on the screen, you still haven't finished, because guess what buster? There's another secret planet hidden behind the rest that needs clearing up before you can rip off your orange space suit and put your feet up in front of the telly.

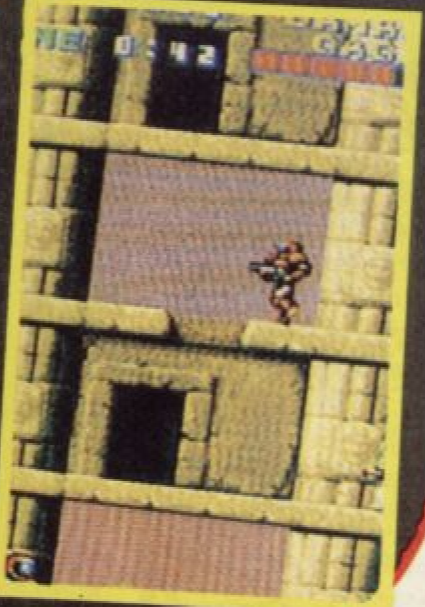
FAXBOX

Above average multi mission alien clearnace program. Well worth a look

Manufacturer: Technos
Difficulty Level: 7
Graphics: 9
Sound: 7
Addictiveness: 8

OVERALL RATING **8**

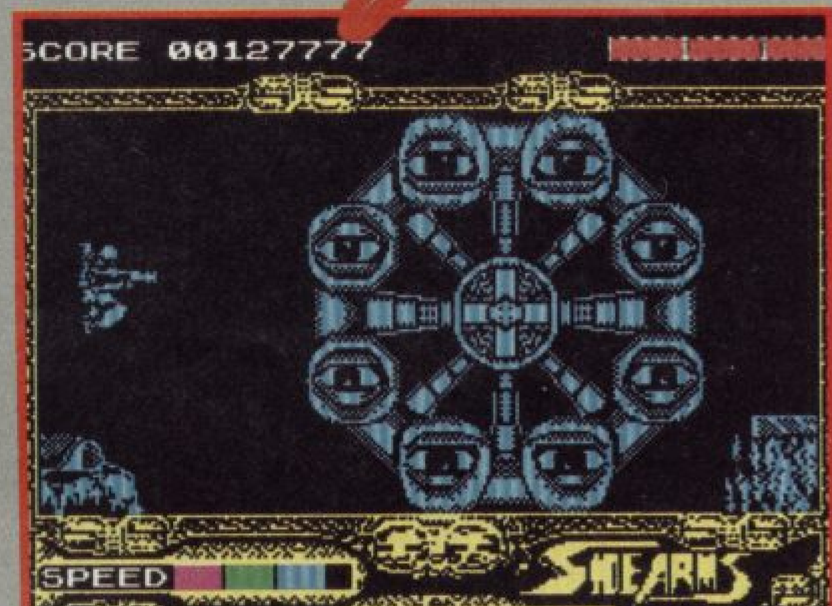
I'm a great fan of **SoL,** it's tough, entertaining, and the graphics are truly spectacular, if you like your dragonflies in tasteful shades of pink and purple against an orange background. Well worth spending the odd twenty pence on, and usually a fair bit more■



ARCADE REVIEW







What is a plot? A plot is a background, a storyline. Does it enhance the game it belongs to, does it help you to play the game any better? No, it makes no difference to the game at all, so why should I bother telling the plot to you. After all the plot of the Arcade version of **Side Arms** had almost no effect on its Spectrum conversion.

For those of you who didn't know, **Side Arms** was a spiffing Arcade game. This Spectrum edition is not an ordinary conversion, but an almost completely inaccurate one. Groans will be emitted, readers will try to get rid of me when they see the high rating at the bottom of the page yet I say, it's brill. Though it may bear little resemblance to its arcade predecessor it is still a great game in its own right and that is how I will judge it. **(Quell shock Tony – G.T.)**

Viewed from the side, you play a robotty chappy who has to fly left to right generally shooting anything that creeps menacingly into view. A frustrating point for all **Zynaps/Defender** players: The nasties come from behind you as well, so you'll have to drop that cowardly tactic of staying in the leftmost half of the screen.

Your large robotty person can turn to shoot these spots on the orifice of nastykind, but you must beware the nasties coming from both directions at once. You start with a puny little 'one shot at a time' gun which is generally useless, but do not be disheartened. Upgrades are right around the next screen which make your weapons seriously better. Certain aliens leave little pods when they get shot (I think we might leave little pads if we got shot mightn't we readers) which can be transformed into various other things simply by shooting them.

Once you have collected a weapon, you can switch between that and any other weapons you may have collected. All of the weapons are useful, depending on the situation you are in. The 3 way is useful when there are a lot of nasties on screen, as it clears them quite quickly though is not very precise. The Auto laser is of particular good use in the second level when little snake like chains follow you around the screen and need a to be shot a multitude of times in the head before they die. The other weapons are also needed in various areas, but I'll leave that for you to find out what you need where.

Upon starting, the graphics do not promise much, but play on. The graphics are well defined, and are a little lacking in details but when you reach the end of a level really come into its own. Huge end of level guardians do their stuff, be it bouncing up and down or spinning round. The guardians are very, very well designed and well animated but they do tend to die very easily.

The game is very easy in some places, though in others it's frustratingly hard. It has been put together in such a way that you get amazingly far in a few goes and then die and believe me, it gives a great sense of 'just one more go'. Buy it.

Fans of the coin-op may be disappointed, but just think of it as an original game■

SIDE ARMS – THE WEAPONRY

Pow –	Power up. This increases your power rating (which starts at 1) in units of 1 to its maximum of 3. The power rating, which is indicated as a bar at the bottom of the screen simply indicates how fast you can manoeuvre.
Spread Gun –	Instead of firing one puny bullet, you fire 3 in a fan shape. The more times you collect this, the more bullets you fire.
Heavy Laser –	This is very smiliar to your first little gun, except that it fires huge thick Star Wars military lasers that are bloody effective, believe me.
3-Way –	This is the business. A 3 way fan gun that fires continuously rather than one shot at a time. In no time you can fill the screen with little white blobs.
Auto –	A heavy duty continuous fire laser that lets the nasties eat a river of laser light. Very useful in the second level. (More later . . .)
Bits –	Tiny little balls that encircle your space ship and fire when you fire. You can collect 3 of these and they are particularly useful against the end of level guardians.

FAXBOX

Highly entertaining mass destruction game that, though it bears little to the arcade game, is still good in its own right

SIDE ARMS
Label: Go!
Author: Probe
Price: £8.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various
Reviewer: Tony Dillon

★★★★☆
★★★★☆ 8

COMPETITION





MEMORANDUM
FROM: **Colonel Kamikaze P. Bear 23654377**
TO: *SU Readers at all battle zones*
DATE: APRIL 88

Attention all troops. No slouching in the ranks.

Your beloved Colonel, Kamikaze P. Bear has a piece of highly important, and possibly extremely lucrative, news to impart to you. Our allies, the boys at Ocean Software have recently been providing us with entertainment in order to boost morale, including that notable game Platoon. And now, in order to ensure that spirits remain high within the batallion, Sergeant Gary Bracey (DSO, Ford Anglia and Bar) is offering us the chance to partake in a competition to win various **Platoon** based goodies. The first prize winners will receive a **Platoon** 'Standee' (large cardboard man), a copy of the game and the soundtrack album. Five second prize winners will take away a copy of the game and the soundtrack from the film. Ten third prize winners will also receive an Ocean T-Shirt.

Right. All those wishing to participate, please form an orderly queue. When I give the signal – wait for it... – answer the questions below, fill in your name and address and post the coupon to 'PLATOON COMPO' SU Competition Mega Control, 14 Holkham Road, Holkham, Orton, Peterborough, PE62 OUF.

THE QUESTIONS:

1. During which war does the action of Platoon take place?
2. Name Charlie Sheen's famous actor brother (who doesn't sound like his brother at all).
3. What is the name of the film that Oliver Stone directed immediately before Platoon?

THE COUPON

Name ....

ADDRESS ....

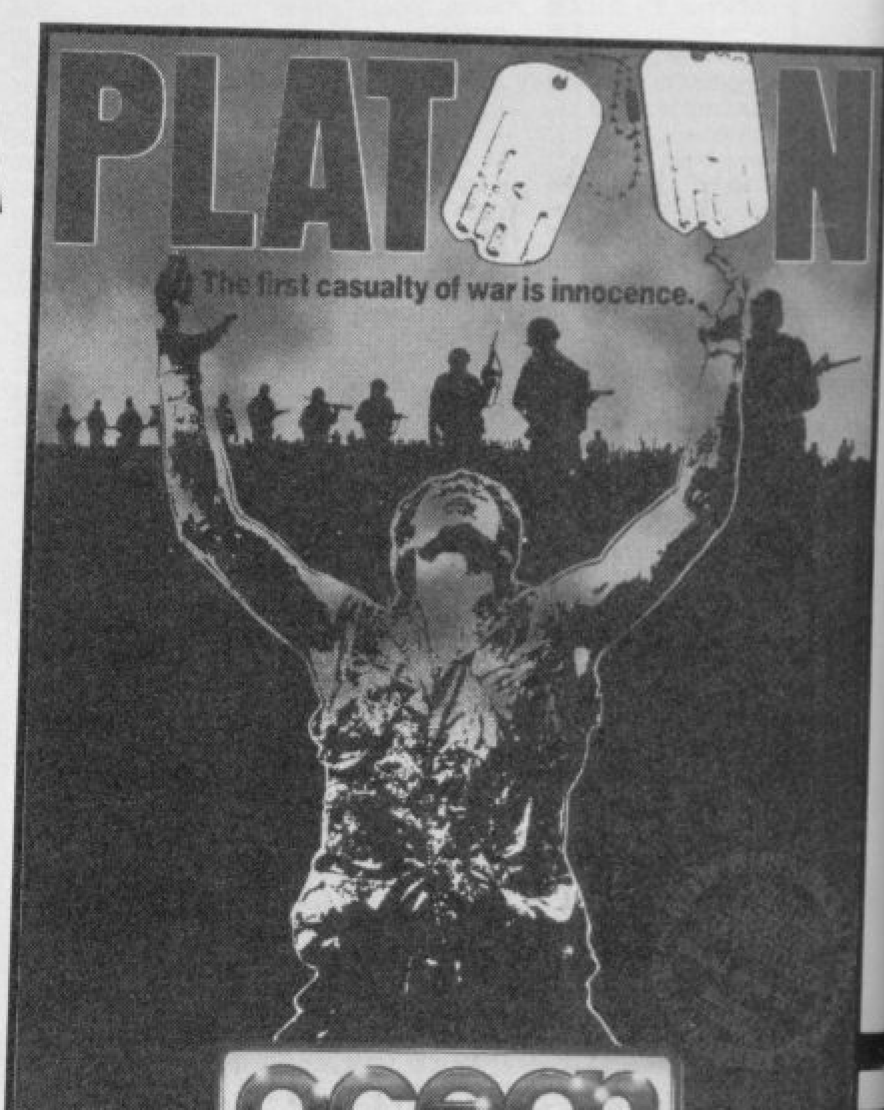
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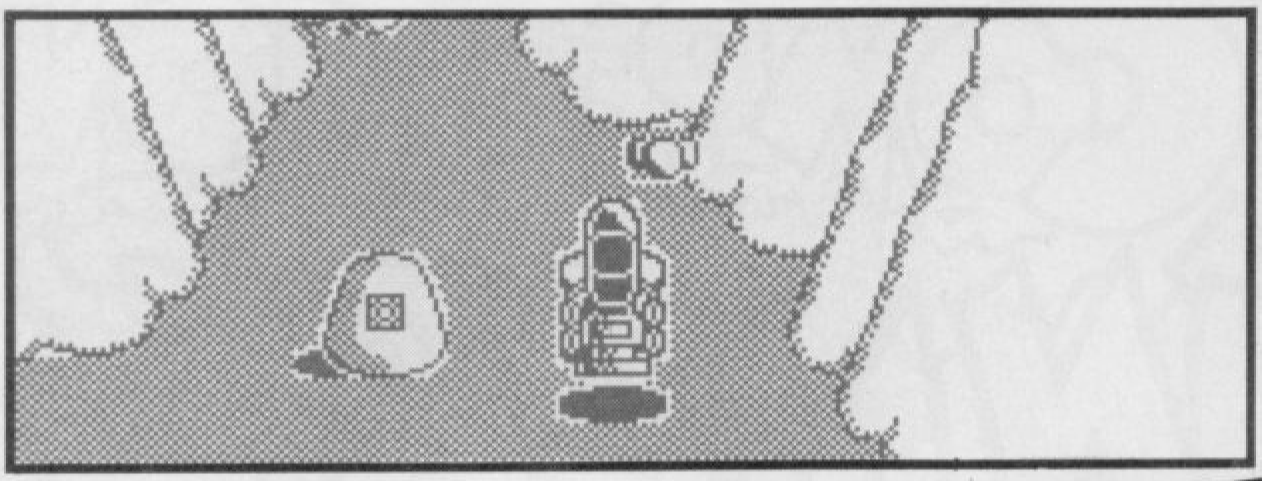
1. ....

2. ....

3. ....

Closing date: 30 April 1988.
No employees of EMAP or OCEAN may enter, otherwise we'll send Sgt Barnes round to sort you out!





TELADON



I've heard of being conceited, but this guy really goes too far. I mean, just get a load of this plot. You're trying to quench the reign of terror laid on by an evil ruler whose name is **Teladon.** Hence the name of the game, you may think, but read on. The moon he rules is also called **Teladon.** (I bet anything you like the big head named the moon after himself. I wouldn't be surprised, you know what these megalomaniac leaders are like). It's a wonder we don't live in Thatcherland, oh yes, a little bit of politics, a little bit of politics, very funny, I, don't, think (quick Ben Elton impersonation there)!

You set about destroying the evil ruler simply by building a bomb. How do you build a bomb? Well, first you've got to find the pieces to make it. These pieces are hidden deep in the bowels of the game, which represents the most impressive technical breakthrough seen on the Spectrum for several years. Why do I say this? It's because the game is set on 2 entirely different environments, giving the game a unique variety in gameplay. This is what the blurb tells us.

Now let me tell you what the game *really* has. Yes, it does have two sections, both entirely different but neither are really wonderful. The first section has you flying down a long canyon avoiding walls and nasties, looking for the lift down to the second section. Lift? More like a hole if you ask me!

Take a look at the screen shots on this page. Look very nice, don't they? But to be honest, it's not very nice to play. The bike is very hard to steer and the cross hairs which control your laser are very, very difficult to use. You find after a while they move to the top of the screen, and as the control to make them come down is the same control to stop the bike, you find yourself stopping and starting a lot. Also, when you are travelling at high speeds, you can be easily knocked into walls in such a way that you lose at least 3 lives before you've even moved. Very frustrating.

The second level is also 3D, but we're talking 'isometric' here. Your hoverbike has turned into a plate with a bit of lego on the front and you are even more uncontrollable than you were before. For some reason, the computer can't make up its mind which way the joystick controls are meant to move. And, in this part, you don't get a gun either, you can only duck and punch. Booorrrriiiinng!



One thing that springs to my mind is that **Teladon,** despite all the blurb, doesn't really give Spectrum owners anything new. In fact, I found it to be very much like 2 average budget games stuck into one full price game■

FAXBOX

A very well thought out concept but the game itself doesn't hang together well enough to receive high merit

TELADON
Label: Destiny Software
Author: Nick Eatock
Price: £8.95
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various
Reviewer: Tony Dillon
★★★☆☆
★★★☆☆ 6

COMPETITION WINNERS



STAR WARS

A big thanks this month to all those wonderfully kind readers who pointed out to us that we made a mistake in the *Star Wars* Compo in January. Yes, question three was a tad misleading, we wanted the name of the *big* robot, not the small one, and well done to all who spotted the error. Not that any of you won a prize for it, but there you are.

The answers in full then were, (A) The first planet destroyed by the Death Star was *Alderaan*; (B) The actor who played Darth Vader was none other than the Green Cross Code Man, *Dave Prowse*; and (C) The name of the Robot (small or large) was *C3PO*.

Ten lucky readers get a video of *Star Wars*, and they are:

Chris Millar, Dumfries. A J Sproston, Cheshire. Roger Enes, London. Adam Wilde, Leicester. Nigel White, West Midlands. Mark Payne, West Midlands. Simon Lennox, N Ireland. Andrew Heals, Wiltshire. Christopher Longley, Wiltshire. William Shaw, Dumfriesshire.

And the following one hundred people who also got the questions right zoom off into outer space on a Star Wars poster:

Gary Bright, Northants. Owen Motley, N Yorks. Mark Saint, Merseyside. Stuart Stephen, Scotland. Dean Ballard, Warwickshire. William Rowe, Nairn. Robert Robertson, Rosshire. Nicholas Meforan, South Humberside. Xavier Bristow, Barnstaple. Wayne Reeves, Wilts. Daniel Pearce, Somerset. Simon Slater, Co Durham. G O Kermeen, Isle of Man. George Aslanis, Kent. David Haffner, Redditch. Tash Schrader, Great Yarmouth. Michael Clark, Glasgow. Benjamin Tan, Cheshire. Christopher Mead, Kent. Mark Emra, Cambridge. Clive Jenner, Great Yarmouth. Neil Granshaw, Berkshire. Dave Bunce, Middlesex. Richard Cooper, Essex. Giacomo Shimmings, East Sussex. Jamie Wilson, Bristol. A Van de Burgh, Stoke Gifford. Phil March, Surrey. Robert Dabell, Warwickshire. Richard Walters, Kent. C Stone, Avon. Jonathan Lock, Kent. J K Marston, Dorset. Anthony de Soyza, Fife. Ian Downey, Kent. Karl Fudge, Fife. Steven Westwood, Bishop Auckland. David Coverley, Cleveland. Derek Cross, Cheshire. Paul Morgan, Dyfed. A Dealsall, London. Charles Allen, Derby. W A White, Oakham. Darren Green, Norfolk. Paul Miller, Lancs. Lee Reveley, Coventry. Roger Buckley, Sheffield. Henry Rowe, Cheshire. Paul Day, Cheltenham. Francisco Assis Rosa, Portugal. Colin Griffiths, London. Matthew Greenep, Nr Lancaster. D Mitchell, Kent. Paul Bayford, Norfolk. Lloyd Wood, Peterborough. Richard Davenport, Macclesfield. Kenny Allsop, Wakefield. Paul Dean, Suffolk. David M Ackriyd, W Yorks. Andrew Green, Staffs. Michael Davies, Lancs. C Knight, Derby. J Austin, Kent. Alan Holmes, Yorkshire. S Hilder, Essex. D Ravenhill, Wolverhampton. S Westlake, Surrey. Gary Bond, Co Antrim. Douglas Patterson, Glasgow. R Clarke, Leicester. D Worth, Cheshire. Robert Stolk, RA Heemskerk. James Watling, West Sussex. Julian Nelberg, Wiltshire. Gordon Eaddie, Glasgow. Dave Bassom, Kent. Tim Peers, Staffs. Martin Dean, Oxford. Richard Stratton, Wilts. Jon Simcoe, Northants. Pete Farrow, Manchester. Mark Fossey, London. Graham Horn, Bristol. Craig Marr, Sheffield. Philip Rankin, Lancs. Robin Yates, Dewsbury. Stephen Peil, Bolton. Jonathan Barr, Belfast. Arjen Otto, Holland. S Bennett, Kent. Edward Evans, Birmingham. David Crozier, Tyne and Wear. Peter Stacey, Derby. Mark Wheeler, Cambridge. Spencer Allen, Herts. P A Lavender, Merseyside. Michael Stanley, Cheshire. Allart Etienne, Belgium. Brian Akerne, Ireland. Robert Horton, N Yorks.

EYE OF THE STORM

January saw the Incredible Eye of the Storm Competition, which was all down to the luverly boys at Incentive. We gave away one spooky Eye of the Storm machine which hurtles weird gases around in a glass dome and impresses people no end. We also offered the chance to win twelve copies of **Driller**, with posters and stickers, and a further fifty people got stickers and posters. The answers to the Arrange the Logos in Chronological Order Compo were C, D, A, B.

First prize winner was:
Stuart Munro, Kent.

Second prize winners (all twelve of them) were:
C W Monk, Kent. Robert Hambleton, Cheshire. Robert Horsell, Wiltshire. Charles Allen, Derby. David Wilson, N Yorks. Richard Walker, Norfolk. Ian Croft, Lancashire. Barry Renwick, Glenocail. Richard Swann, Surrey. Mark Jones, Bournemouth. Paul Morgan, Dyfed. Matthew Hunt, Warkwickshire.

And the following fifty people get the stickers and the posters:
David Purkess, Hants. Johan Gustavsson, Sweden. W Cordingley, Kent. Thomas Ledner, Oxford. Andrew Taylor, Cambridgeshire. Ken Barlow, Clwyd. S G Oglesby, RAF Gayton. D worth, Cheshire. Jonathan Spaul, Suffolk. Stephen Parks, Kent. J L Thompson, N Yorkshire. Ian Mazey, West Midlands. D A Lee-Keow, Coventry. Miha Stoute, Suffolk. Darrel Manuel, Mid Glam. S Phillips, Ramstein Air Base. Stephen Jones, Anglesey. Andrew Rawless, Somerset. C Bean, East Sussex. L Smith, Hull. Neil Comerford, Coventry. Philip Stanton, Middlesex. Sebastian Sampson, Surrey. Stuart Weston, Peterborough. Matthew Hildred, Halifax. J A Moore, Shanklin. Andrew Nairn, Scotland. M Lashley, Norfolk. Simon Lennox, N Ireland. M Wright, Wilts. Gary Bright, Northants. Gregory Easton, Nr Sheffield. A H Jones, Lancs. Jeremy Gregg, Hull. Fraser Gartshore, Inverness. C Calverley, Hants. Stuart Shrimpton, Leicester. Adam Wilde, Leicester. Graham Parker, Tyne & Wear. Craig McIntosh, Scotland. Philip Wyn, Bedfordshire. R J Smith, Preston. Philip March, Surrey. Andrew Hubbard, Tayside. Darren Hendley, Skegness. B Crisp, Skegness. P H Parker, Leeds. Stephen Morris, Merseyside. T Small, Surrey. Marcello Bortolino, London.

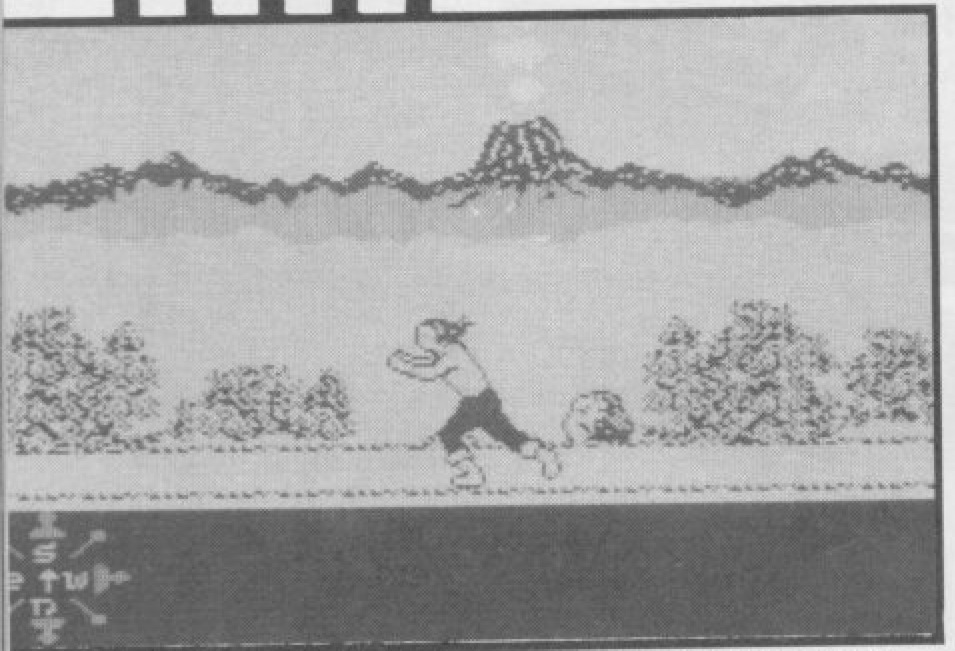



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3 CLASS

TIR NA NOG



Hold on to your space helmet (or broadsword) – Gargoyle's games are back, they're cheap, and they're still brilliant.

The Gargoyle animated arcade adventure trilogy – **Tir Na Nog, Dun Darach** and **Marsport** – first appeared in 1984/5. Two things left the reviewers dumbfounded; **first, the unpronounceable Gaelic titles, second, the wonderful** animation and depth of gameplay, which were so impressive that all three games won high praise and several awards.

Now the trilogy is re-released at budget price on the *Rebound* label, *Hewson's* new showcase of blasts from the past. Dash out and buy all three at once, or you must need a new brain.

Based loosely on the Gaelic myths of the hero Cuchulainn (that's pronounced Cahullan, folks), all three adventures, two of the past and one of the future, share a revolutionary use of giant sprite animation which has not been bettered to this day. Programmers Greg Follis and Roy Carter based the frames of animation on sequential pictures of authentic walking; hence the realism of the animation. The main characters, Cuchulainn and Commander John Marsh, share a loping stride which is so watchable that just running the demo is more enjoyable than playing many of the latest games. Like the other games, **Tir Na Nog** has a scrolling grapics section in the middle third of the screen. The hero stays in the centre of the screen while the background scrolls past him.

Cuchulainn's aim is to reunite the fragments of the shattered Seal of Calum. **Tir Na Nog** – the Land of Youth – is inhabited by many hostile forces, principally the Sidhe. But since Cuchulainn is already dead, he cannot be killed, just dissipated by repeated attacks, at which point he returns to the gate of **Tir Na Nog,** loses all the objects he was carrying and has to start again. Likewise, none of Cuchalainn's enemies can be killed, only dissipated for a short time – so don't hang around after a fight!

Above the main display appears a compass and the clues which you will need to locate the **fragments of the Seal. Below, inventories of the objects and** weapons Cuchulainn has found. He can carry up to four objects, and can thrust with any one to use it as a weapon.

The world can be viewed from any of four directions by changing the, "camera angle" You can also move in any of these directions, following tne paths, so mapping is essential. There are also many doorways to caves and tunnels, so you will need to find keys to use these shortcuts. As always, though, the hardest bit is not finding objects, but persuading their owners to give them up . . .■

HINTS

- **To successfully attack a Sidhe you need two weapons or one object of power**
- **You can defend yourself against Cavewights using special objects, the clue to which is given by the colour of the cave**
- **The letters on locked doors are all clues to the location of the key**
- **The library contains the final clues which will solve the game once you have collected the four parts of the Seal. Examine the scrolls, one of which you will need in the final screen**

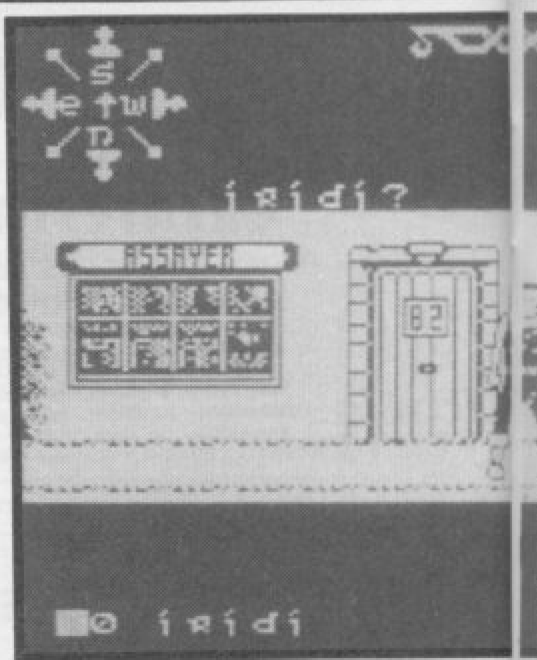
FAXBOX

Revolutionary animated adventure, now a must at bargain price

TIR NA NOG
Label: Rebound
Authors: Gargoyle
Price: £1.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Chris Jenkins

★★★★★
★★★★☆ **9**



DUN DARACH

Cuchulainn sets off for the mist-shrouded city of **Dun Darach** in search of his kidnapped charioteer Leog.

While **Tir Na Nog** takes place mostly outdoors, **Dun Darach** is set in the narrow streets of the city. It's divided into quarters, each one of which consists of several named districts. In this game, the other characters you meet are more intelligent, pursuing their own tasks. While you try to bribe them to give up the objects you need.

You'll need to earn currency in the form of Iridi, small gold sequins. This you can do either by working (yuk!), by gambling (more like it) or by stealing (aha)!

There aren't as many ghoulie monsters in **Dun Darach.** Instead, two basic characters, one male and one female, crop

FAXBOX

The exciting sequel to Tir Na Nog; not quite so complex, still good

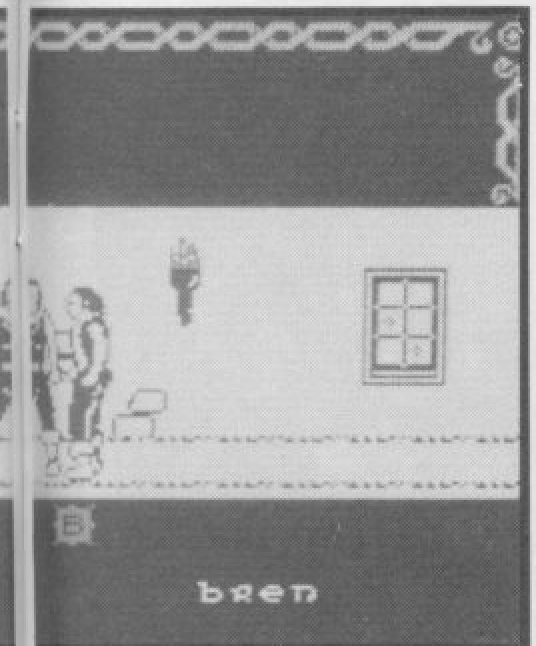
DUN DARACH
Label: Rebound
Authors: Gargoyle
Price: £1.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Chris Jenkins

★★★★☆
★★★★☆ **8**

SIC GAMES

ADVENTURE REVIEW



up over and over again. Each is accompanied by a symbol and an identifying name in the text window■

HINTS .

● **Scores of secondary quests have to be solved in your efforts to rescue Loeg; but there is no set order in which you have to accomplish them**

● **Every door bears a number, and every street a name, so mapping is straightforward**

● **Behind every door is a room or set of rooms, which may be occupied or empty**

● **Banking your money is a good way to earn more; getting robbed is a good way to lose some!**



MARSPORT

It's 2494, and Cuchulainn's great-great-great-great-great (ENOUGH! –GT) grandson Commander John Marsh is the only hope of saving Mankind from the revolting slimy Sept. Substitute space helmets for swords and aliens for gremlins, and you'll have **Marsport.** The basic layout, clever animation and detailed background design is very much in the same vein as **Tir Na Nog** and **Dun Darach.**

While the Earth and Moon are surrounded by a force field, Mars has fallen to the Sept invaders. You must retrieve the plans for improved field generators from the Marsport Central Computer. Unfortunately, the computer is very keen to defend itself, and can't tell the difference between you and the Sept . . .

As usual, you have a four-way view, detailed scrolling backgrounds and the opportunity to find and utilise various weapons and tools. You have three main objectives; locate the computer, find the plans and escape. Along the way you'll have to fight the aliens, who are invariably hostile, and robots, some of which are aggressive guardians while others are helpful information gatherers.

Supply units are your main source of useful objects, so look out for them. Lockers can be used to store objects once you have found them. Charge units wil replenish your power, while Factory units assemble two or more objects to manufacture a more useful tool.

Finally, key units and vidtex units allow you to access locked areas and to gain useful information■

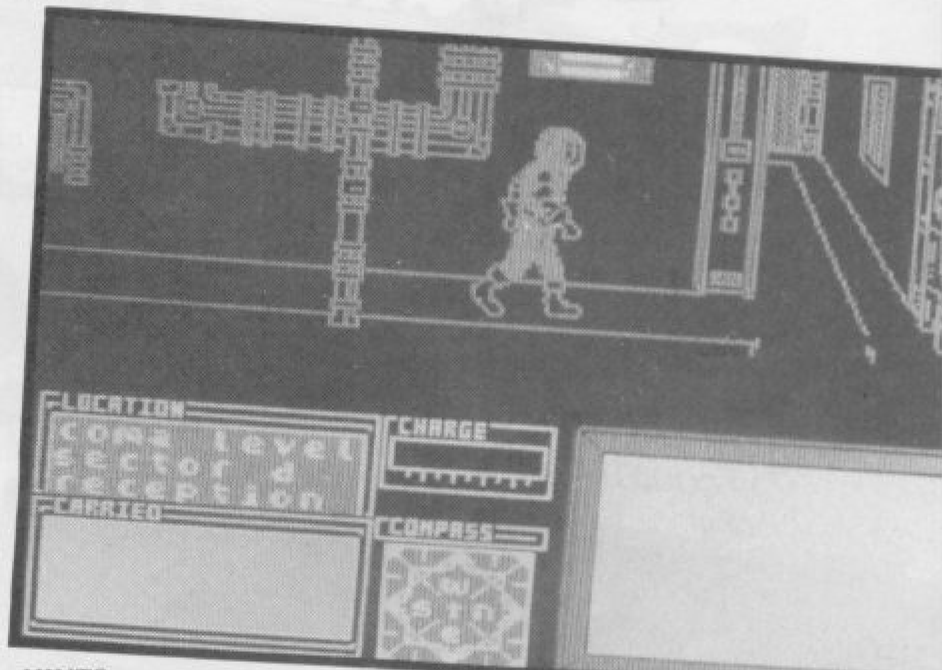
FAXBOX

Cuchulainn in space; even better than Tir Na Nog

MARSPORT
Label: Rebound
Authors: Gargoyle
Price: £1.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Chris Jenkins

★★★★★★ ★★★★★★ 10



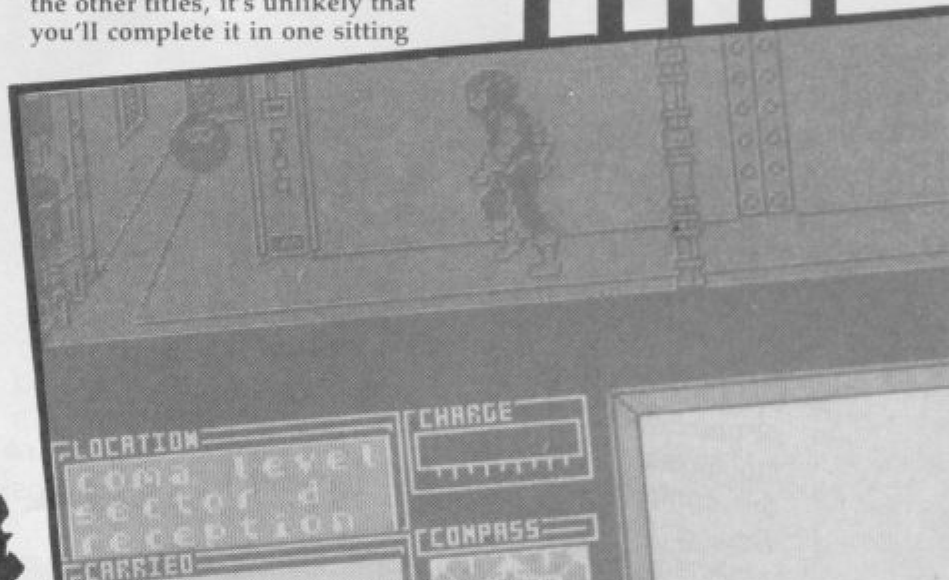
HINTS

● **Approach wall units with care – some are robot storage niches**

● **Map the game carefully – it's even more complex than** Tir Na Nog **and** Dun Darach

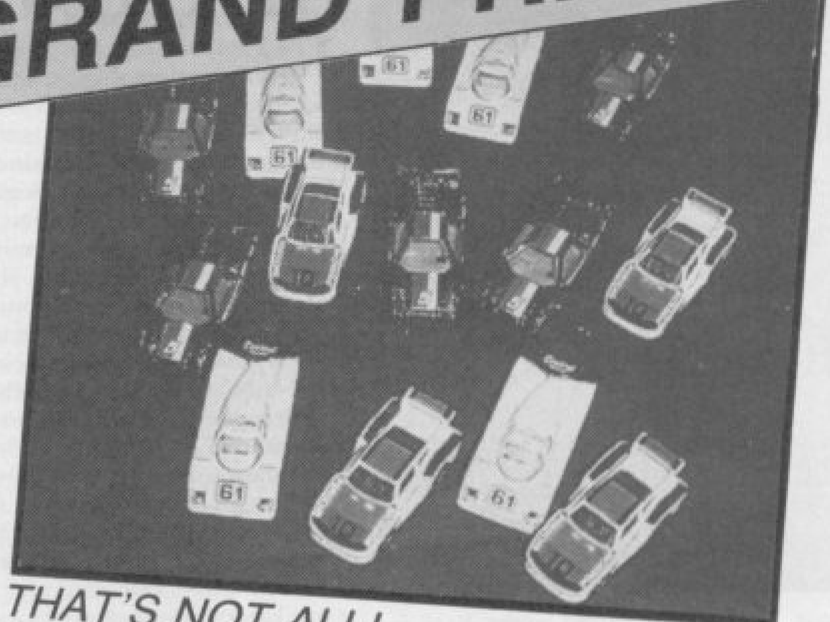
● **Get a weapon, silly; you won't have much chance against the aliens without one**

● **Save the game regularly. Like the other titles, it's unlikely that you'll complete it in one sitting**

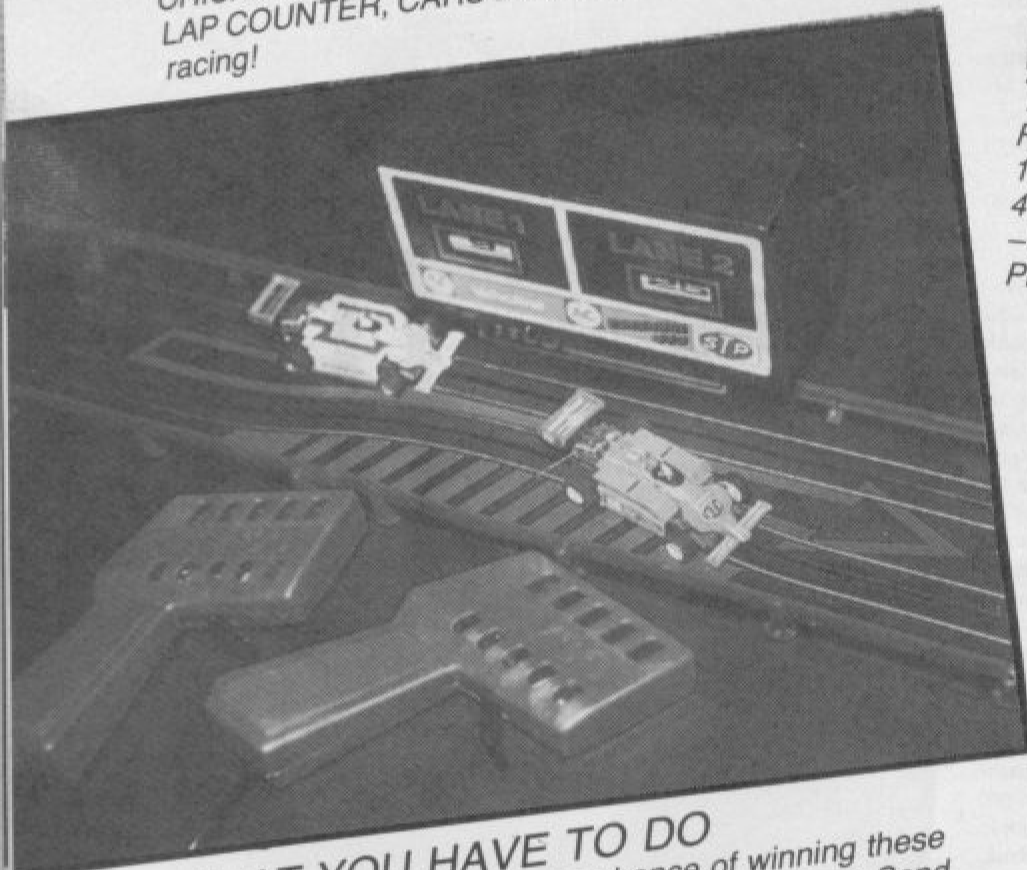


COMPETITION

GRAND PRIX, GRAND PRIZE

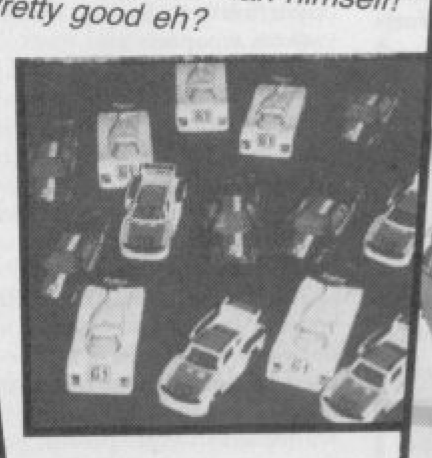


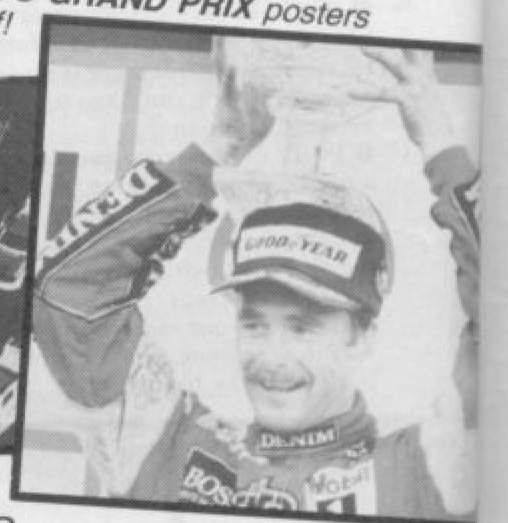
Neeeeeeeeeeeyoiiiiiing! In the grand tradition of Fabulous SU Prizes this has to be one of the fabbiest. Thanks to those lovely people at Martech we've got a totally awesome **Nigel Mansell Grand Prix** game to give away to some lucky reader. It's an all action high speed racing car set complete with FIENDISH CURVES, ADRENALIN PUMPING CHICANES, TRACK CROSS OVERS and DIGITAL LAP COUNTER, CARS and everything you need to get racing!



THAT'S NOT ALL!

For the runners up we've got:
15 Totally authentic Matchbox model racing cars and:
*4 Special **NIGEL MANSELL'S GRAND PRIX** posters – signed by the man himself!*
Pretty good eh?



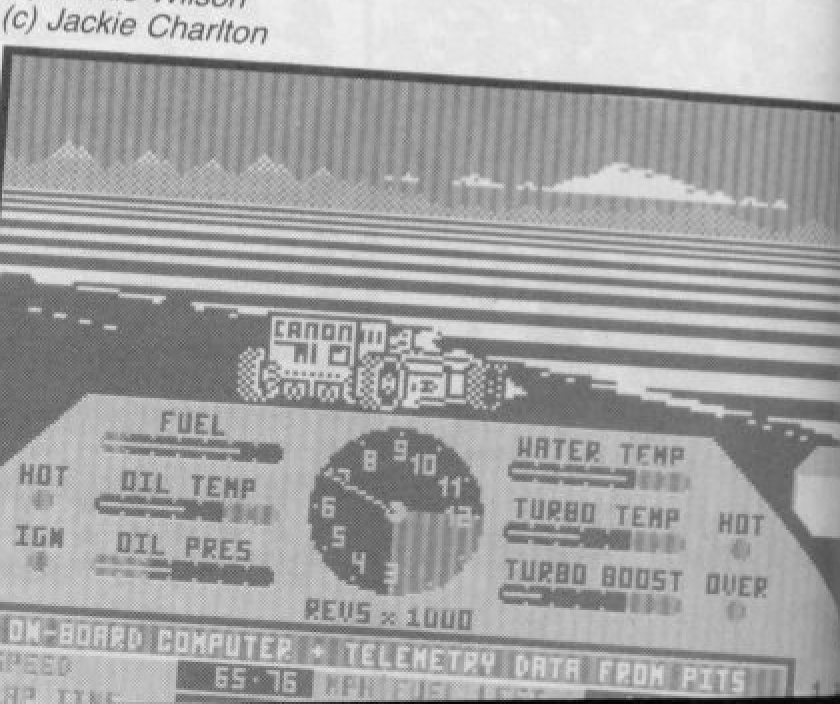


THE QUESTIONS

1 What is Nigel Mansell's highest position in the Drivers' Championship?
2 Who was the last Englishman to win the World Championship?
3 Which of these is NOT a famous racing driver?
(a) Jackie Stewart
(b) Jackie Wilson
(c) Jackie Charlton

WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO

All you need to do to stand a chance of winning these fabulous prizes is answer the questions below. Send the completed answer form to, "Brum Brum I'm a Racing Car" Competition, SU Mega Control, 14 Holkham Road, Orton, Peterborough PE2 0UF. Closing date for the competition is March 15th.



COUPON
ANSWERS

1...
2...
3...

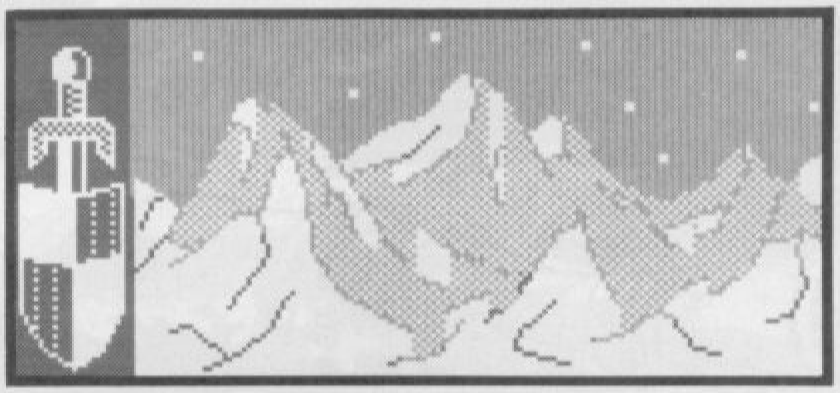
People who work for either EMAP or Martech don't get to enter. This includes Tony Dillon. Ha ha.

ADVENTURE



REVIEW

LOADS OF MIDNIGHT



A spoof on **Lords of Midnight** sounds like a brilliant idea for an adventure, so where does this one go wrong?

It comes in three parts and was written using the **Quill, Illustrator** and **Patch.** Your quest is to seek out your companions and go to Cigarash to destroy the frozen crown.

The graphics are simple, very repetitive and take quite a while to draw. The text descriptions are brief, consisting mainly of available exits. Spelling mistakes start to appear with increasing regularity and the messages are disjointed and badly constructed.

The author is obviously an admirer of Fergus McNeil and has used a similar style in writing this adventure but, where this worked for Fergus, it doesn't work for Keith Hughes of Penna Productions.

The playing area is quite large but there is hardly anything to do. You can't examine much and the parser is very limited. In one location you find a bench. If you input **"sit on bench"**, the response comes up, **"Rudely ignoring the location description, Ludo decided to be seated on the bench."** Input **"Stand"**, response **"Ludo, however did not understand a word of that."** Try again, input

"Stand", response, **"Ludo, however did not understand a word of that."** Try again, input, **"Stand up"**, response, **"In this direction Ludo could not travel."**

Surely if you're going to allow the player to sit you should also allow him to stand?

Your travelling companions may as well be cardboard cutouts for the companionship they offer; you can't even examine them.

As far as gameplay goes, there isn't any. The puzzles are totally contrived and the humour is very unfunny.

You seem to spend the whole game travelling from one side of your map to the other to perform one action then it's about turn and trudge back to the other side of the map

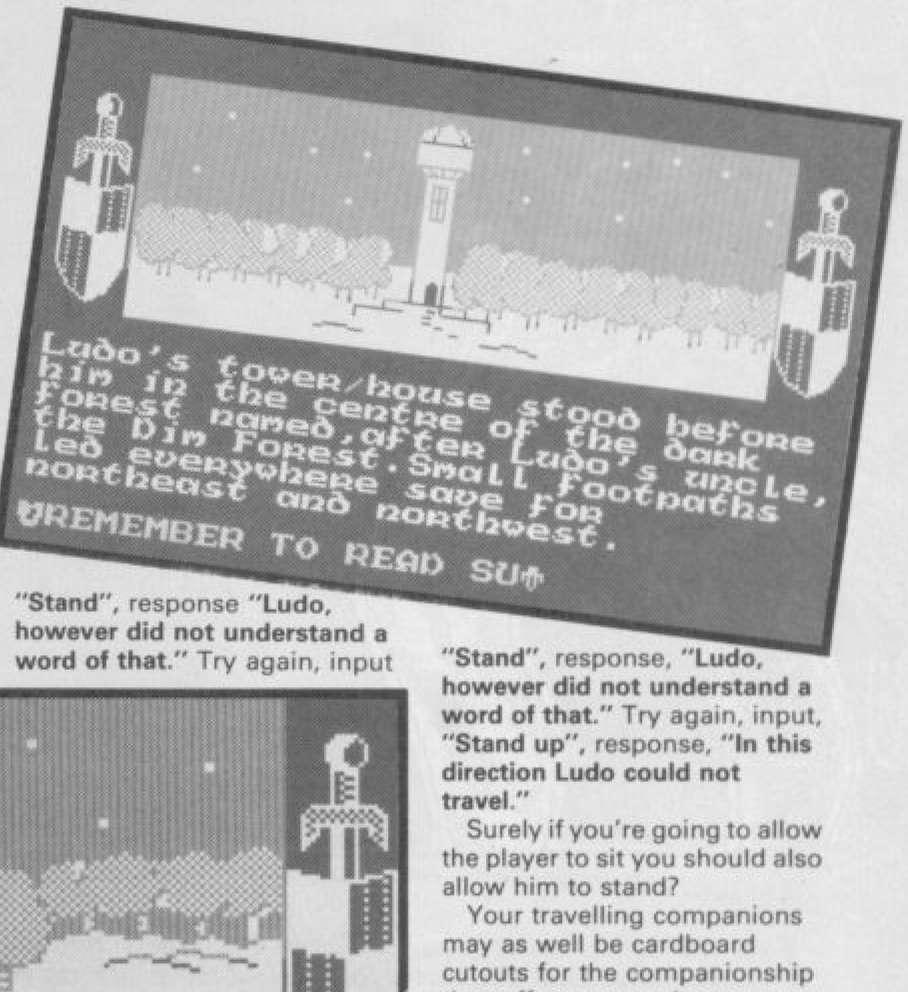
The one thing I thought was OK in this adventure was the use of sound. Used in a very simple way, but very effectively indeed.

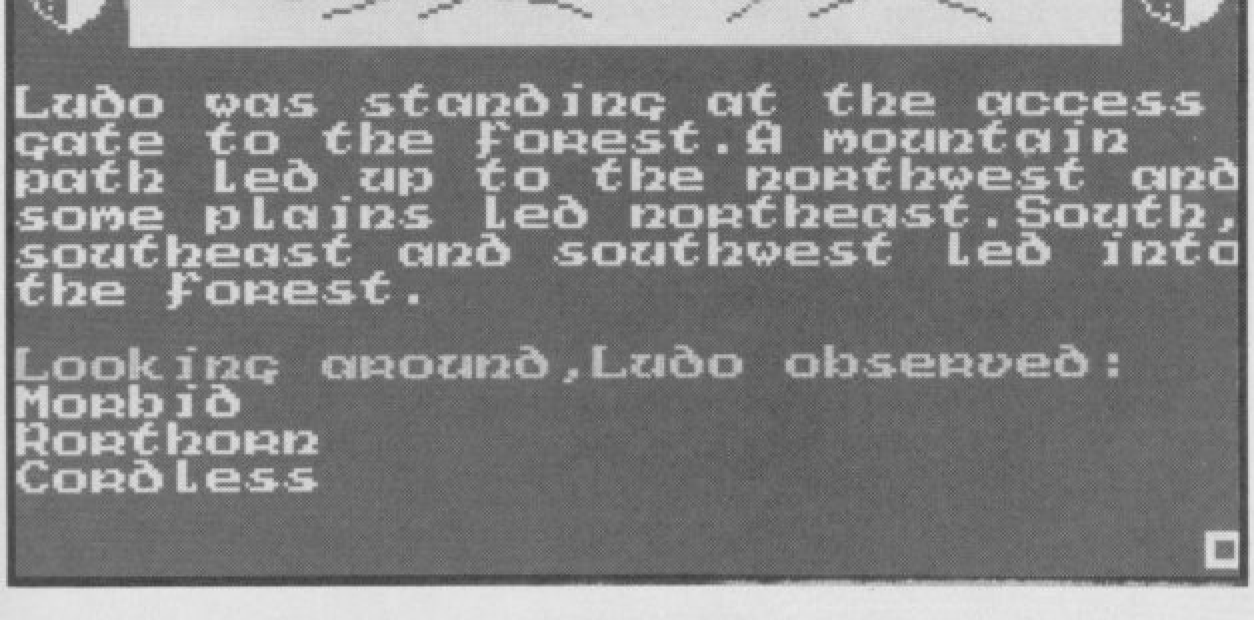
I didn't enjoy playing this adventure at all and can't find anything in its favour that would make me recommend it to anyone■

FAXBOX

A good idea for a text and graphics adventure that just doesn't come off

LOADS OF MIDNIGHT
Label: CRL
Author: Keith Hughes (Penna Productions)
Price: £7.95
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: none
Reviewer: Tony Dillon
★★☆☆☆ ★☆☆☆☆ 3





TH



What a month!! It's no use. The Dancing Ogre is definitely no place for a lady to live! All month strange people have been coming up to me and saying things like, "I've got a Spectrum," or, "I've got a very battered rubber one!" This is no way to talk to a Soceress and I refuse to put up with it.

One particularly hairy young man pinched me in a particularly private place and shouted, "Bring me a flagon of ale, wench!" He is now a particularly hairy toad and extremely hopping mad!

Anyway, to cut a long story short, I've decided to move out, I've found this nice little house on the moors. Years ago it belonged to Lord and Lady Baskerville, but more recently it's been used as a pretty exclusive private school. It's perfect for what I have in mind . . . an Adventurers' Academy.

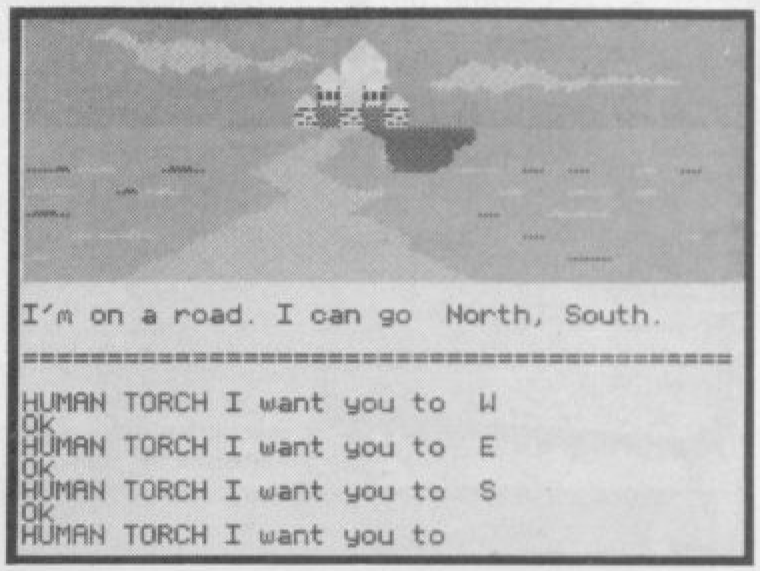
If you want to enrol and become a *Sorceress' Apprentice* Then send me your name and address, and a full list of all your completed adventures. If you also enclose an SAE (or IRC if you live abroad) I will send you more information about the Academy and your duties as an apprentice.

Anyone who writes in asking for help in an adventure, about which I don't have any information, will be sent a full list of all the apprentices and the games they have completed, again you must send an SAE.

While I was searching for some drawer space so that I could unpack my trunk I found a batch of letters that Gordo hadn't got around to answering. I noticed that quite a few of them made mention of **Blizzard Pass** and the fact that they were still stuck even though Gordo had made an effort to help through the pages of SU.

Also amongst the letters was one from 'The Parkers' which gave a little more information on this game. So if you're stuck in the ice cave help is at hand.

To leave the ice cave you must **drop chair, go chair, dig roof, go hole** and if you're wearing the snowshoes then all will be well!



I got this weird letter from someone who signs himself THE GREENOCK GARGOYLE alias John Docherty. John asked me to inform you that CPU has folded due to lack of interest, but BASIC has arisen in its place and is the official club magazine of The ZX Spectrum Club. If you want more information then drop John a line at 38 Grosvenor Road, Greenock, Inverclyde PA15 2DR.

Eddie Smith

To avoid dying of thirst **Take coat, Wear coat, Take ignition keys, N, W, W, W, W, N, Enter van, Insert ignition keys, Drive north, Exit van, N, W, E, Hit wall panel, E, Take big key, (W,W), W, D, Unlock door, D, Take wine** *(drink the wine when you get thirsty).*

To dispose of Teddy Bear go to the coffee machine, kick it to get the coffee then buy some arsenic and poison the coffee. Then go to the bear and watch the coffee-loving creep die!

To get a room at the Inn, go to the Samaritan and **Say help**, *take note and go to the Inn.* **Do not read note.** *Once there* **Give note.** *The key in the broom cupboard opens room 105 but you need the torch.*

Stifflip

Instruct Miss Primbottom to take the match from Stifflip then go north and east, tie the thread to the rope and pull the thread, buy a jar and pick up the circular then go to the tree and climb it. Untie the knotted rope to get rid of the rope trap.

Light the match to light the circular then put the lit circular in the beehive. Put the honey in the jar. Give the reed to Stifflip and ask him to cut it. Give the hairclip, wireless and crystal to Braindeath. Instruct Professor Braindeath to open the wireless and put the crystal and hairclip inside before closing it. Give the wireless to the barman. Give the honey to the monkey and then you can take the banana.

Questprobe 3 seems to be causing loads of problems and being all powerful I have decided to provide the first part of the solution.

Say "Micah", Enter shack, Get candle, South, Fly, Enter tarpit, Give candle to thing, Leave pit, Flame off, Switch (to Thing), **Hold breath, Wait 15, Feel down** (until you reach the machinery), **Smash machinery, West, North, North, East, Light candle, Examine fire, West, South, South, East, South, Switch** (to Torch), **Throw high flame at tarpit, Fly hills, Fly hills, Flame off, Enter cave, Examine boulder, Shoot high flame at boulder, Flame off,**

HE SORCERESS

Stuck in a dungeon or helpless at the hands of fetid trolls? Write to The Sorceress SU Priory Ct, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.



Get pebble, throw pebble hard up shaft, Switch (to Torch), **Examine watch, Enter cave, Enter shaft, Down, Down, Flame on Nova, Look . . .** OK everybody?

Thanks to David Thomas for the following hints on **Inspector Flukeit.** As you and Blunders are limited to how much you can carry, use the car as a collection point.

Blunders is a driver who is a bit accident prone, but is useful for breaking things, ie the vase and the trunk.

Ask the policeman for the whistle in Scunsdale Road. This copper's a bit corrupt. Get the feather duster from the maid and use it to tickle the gardener to make him drop the shears. The gardener also knows about local people and events so get him to examine the tapestry.

Take the rotten meat from the fridge and remember to close it or you'll be dead meat. The flies will swarm to the rotten meat. When you find the slab strike the skull, enter the lab and get the acid. Return through Professor Mundle's bedroom.

I got a letter from Ingrid Bottomlow, she apologised for not coming to see me this month - Phew!! That was a close one! – so she sent some help for part two of **Gnome Ranger** and promised to call in with help for part three in a day or two. (She'll have to find me first)!

You begin part two in a garden where you must **Pick the tea leaf,** thereby killing the poor Tea Bush, but providing you with your quest, which is to find a way to revive the bush and make a cup of tea.

Go to the library and read the books for some clues as to what to do, and the way to do it. Go to the kitchen and take the seed and the bulb. Plant the seed in the garden. The seed grows into Greenslave which needs to be brought to life. To make the **Animate Potion** you need the Elder Berry, Thistle Flower, Rowan Berry and Mint Leaf. Take the ingredients to the kitchen and put them in the pot in the precise order given above. The potion will automatically be added to your inventory.

Put the potion onto the Greenslave and plant the bulb in the garden. The Blue Telelily and the White Telelily will appear. To get to the Treehouse you must climb the trees. In order to enable the treehouse to move you must take the compost heap and drop it on rocky ground at times. Send the Greenslave and the Treehouse to the cave then get the Telelilies and trundle off to the cave itself.

When you're all outside the cave then give the Blue Telelily to the Greenslave, send the Treehouse into the cave and tell it to wait 5. Ask the Greenslave to find the Stinkwort Shoot and put it in Blue Telelily. Then wait until Greenslave returns with the Stinkwort Shoot.

Some points worthy of note are that anything put into the Blue Telelily will reappear from the White One.

Right, you're on your own now. If you get stuck at the other side of the hedge and you can't work out how to get back. You might find the answer when you're at your *Witts End* some time.

Better get my 'move' to the Academy organised. I wonder how many applications for apprenticeships I'll get? **Academy Contact: SAE c/o 78 Merton Road, Highfield, Wigan WN3 6AT.**

Here are some tips on **Guild of Thieves.** If you waste too much time in the boat at the start of the game, then the Master Thief will pick you up and throw you on to the jetty. But you miss 5 points if this is allowed to happen. What you should do is **Examine boat, Examine rope, Pull rope** and the boat glides to the jetty, simply **Enter jetty** and the boat moves back out into the river.

Inventory at this point and you will find that you have a swag bag. **Open swag bag, Look inside swag bag** and you've found your lamp.

Help the old man with the trunk to gain entry to the castle. Keep 'treasures' in swag bag so the Gatekeeper doesn't see them.

WITTS END

STOP tearing your hair out, you'll be bald before your time! Consult our quick fire selection of hints, if you don't find what you want then all I can suggest is that you order a toupee!

GUILD OF THIEVES – The rat race takes place in the courtyard approximately fifty moves from the start of the game. If you miss it then you will only find the bird cage. You must bet on this race!

DOUBLE AGENT – The first few moves for Agent Number 1 are West, West, South, West, West, then the game opens up and you're on your way to the £50 prize, so no more hints on this one until the prize is claimed!

KAYLETH – To get through the solid door INSERT DEXTA and become a Destroyer droid then FIRE PLASMA AT DOOR. Wear the lenses, they are so dark that you cannot see so FLIP KNOT, YES. To get back from the rock gullet's stomach RIDE HOOP from the store room location.

LABOUR OF HERCULES – The only way to kill the lion is with your bare hands so STRANGLE LION, the skin it with the knife. The boar is too quick for you to catch so CHASE BOAR and follow it until it gets trapped in the snow. THROW NET over boar and GET BOAR.

LIFETERM – Lock the pilot in the storeroom. The wax is to put in your ears. Use the wire to pick a lock, and the money to bribe the officer.

MORON – To stop the wolves getting you drop the meat which you found in the fridge. In the silent room SHOUT. Insert the fuel cell into the droid. To escape from the hole you are told that the exit is not obvious therefore it must be OBSCURE – and so is the puzzle if you ask me!

SHADOWS OF MORDOR – Sam must be carrying the crystal when he goes into the tunnels because he doesn't like spiders. Whenever you, as Sam, encounter the bloated spider, input: GALADRIEL and the spider will retreat.

THE ODYSSEY OF HOPE – Give the wine to the Centaur to get him drunk and he will give you his lyre. When the harpies swoop down to steal the food input: SCARE HARPIES, BANG SHIELD. Burn the hydra to get its teeth. Play the lyre to the King of Hades.



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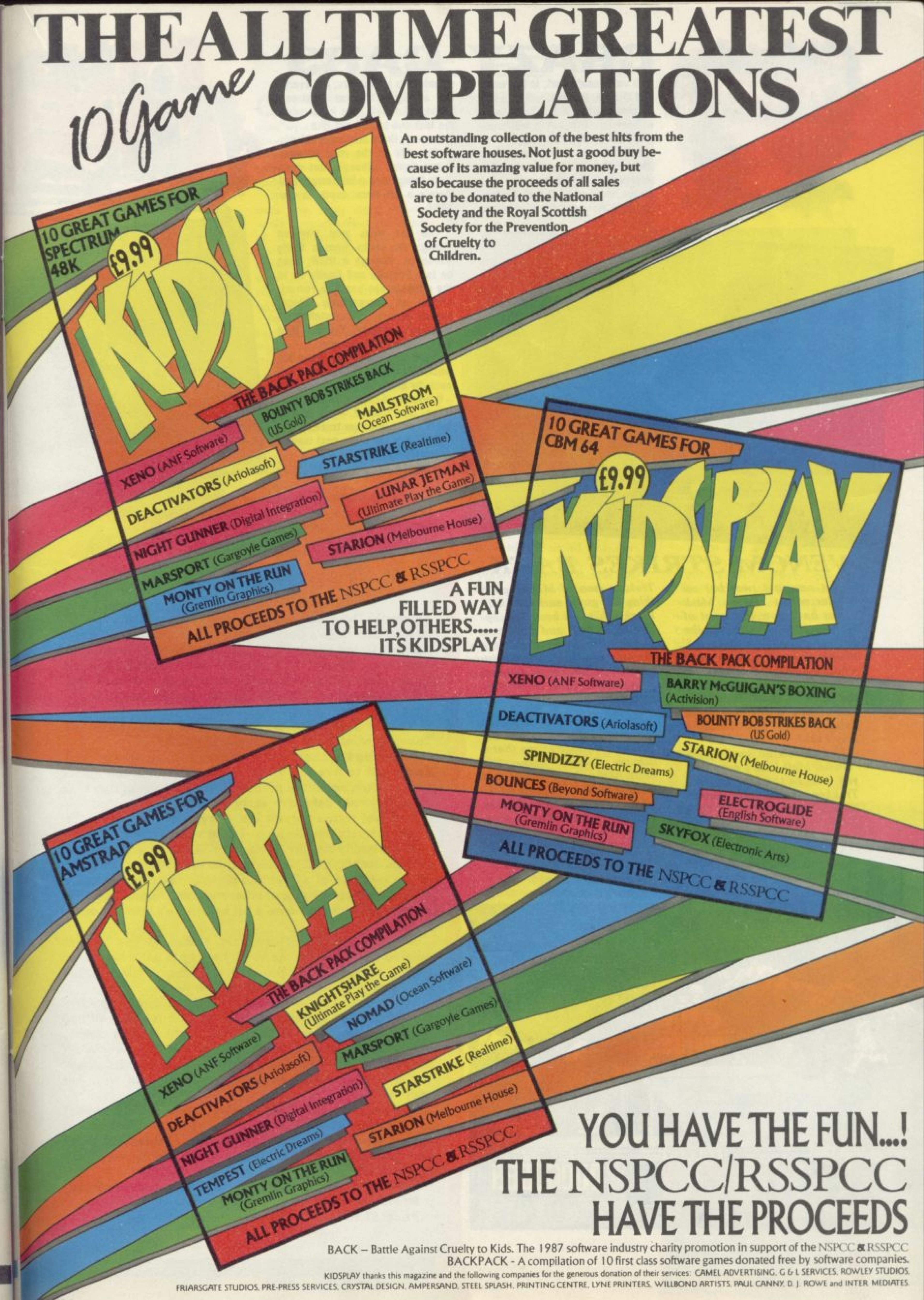
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MILES GORDON TECHNOLOGY

*Timings are approximate, depending on drive



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MARSPORT (Gargoyle Games)
DEACTIVATORS (Ariolasoft)
STARSTRIKE (Realtime)
NIGHT GUNNER (Digital Integration)
STARION (Melbourne House)
TEMPEST (Electric Dreams)
MONTY ON THE RUN (Gremlin Graphics)
ALL PROCEEDS TO THE NSPCC & RSSPCC
YOU HAVE THE FUN...!
THE NSPCC/RSSPCC
HAVE THE PROCEEDS
BACK – Battle Against Cruelty to Kids. The 1987 software industry charity promotion in support of the NSPCC & RSSPCC
BACKPACK - A compilation of 10 first class software games donated free by software companies.
KIDSPLAY thanks this magazine and the following companies for the generous donation of their services: CAMEL ADVERTISING, G & L SERVICES, ROWLEY STUDIOS, FRIARSGATE STUDIOS, PRE-PRESS SERVICES, CRYSTAL DESIGN, AMPERSAND, STEEL SPLASH, PRINTING CENTRE, LYNE PRINTERS, WILLBOND ARTISTS, PAUL CANNY, D. J. ROWE and INTER MEDIATES.

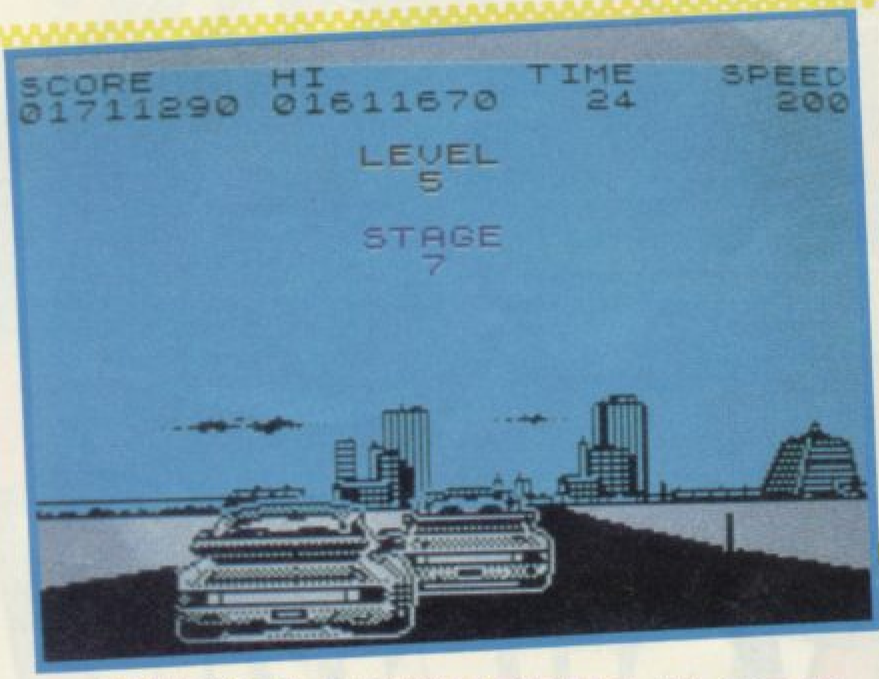
PREVIEW 7

CRAZY CARS

It's unfortunate that, in the wake of Outrun, it's impossible to see a screenshot of a 3-D race game without thinking that it will probably be a bit disappointing.

Take Crazy Cars from Titus (through Spectrum newcomers Entertainment International). The screen shots make it look fantastic. And its reputation on other machines is impressive, but everyone at SU still has a strong feeling of "Well, you know what the last one turned out like . . ."

Anyway, there are fewer objects at the side of the road to slow things down, although that does make things look a bit barren, and there's a bit more depth to the game.



You can work your way up through the ranks from a lowly Mercedes, through a BMW, then on to a Porsche and finally on to the ultimate ego-boost, a Ferrari, driving at increasingly illegal speeds across six stretches of American roadway; Florida, New York, Malibu, Arizona etc.

If you manage to get round the track quick enough, and don't get eaten by the other boys in the race – forever road-racing, these Americans, aren't they? – you qualify for the next level/car/track.

We'll tell you more next issue.
Streetdate: April.
Price: £8.95



VENOM STRIKES BACK

Not one, not two, but an incredible three Mask games have now come out of Gremlin. All featuring the hunky, chunky, firm-jawed, dimple-chinned, blond and wholesome Matt Trakker.

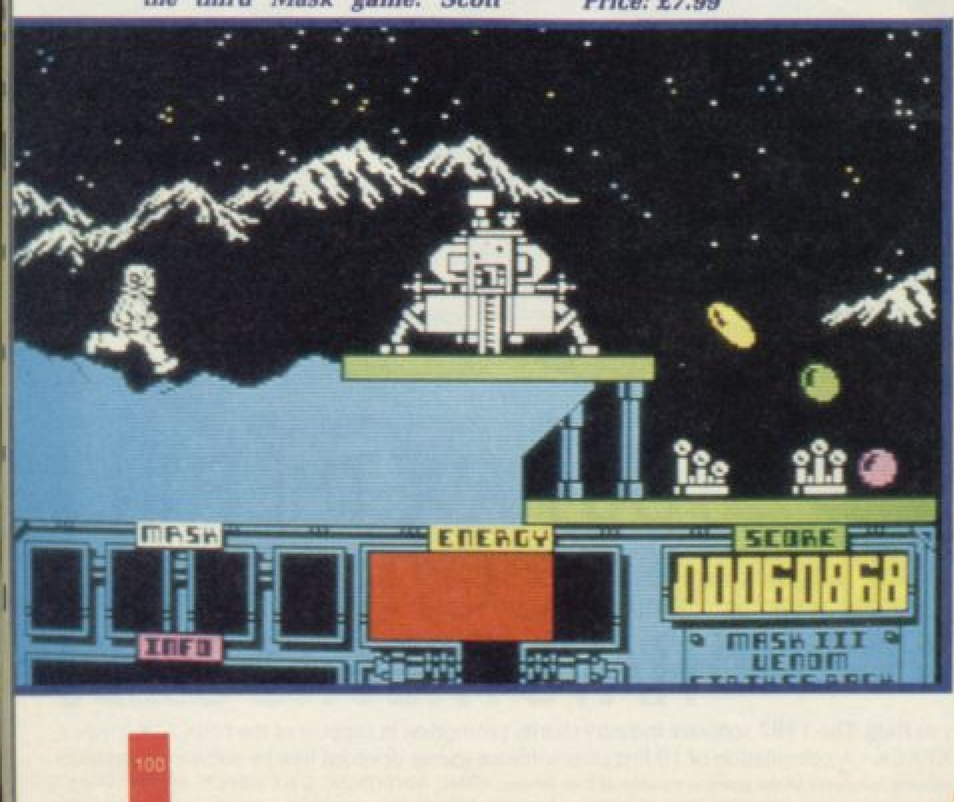
Well tell me this, suckers. If the dude is quite so wholesome, how come he's got a son, huh? Where's Mrs Trakker, may I ask?

And there's no use saying, "Oh no, Matt hasn't got a son, you must be thinking of Back Trakker, the famous contortionist," because I know he's got a son, because he's just been kidnapped. So there.

And that leads me, rather neatly I thought, into the storyline of Venom Strikes Back, the third Mask game. Scott Trakker (son of Matt – good thing the guy's surname isn't Black, uh?) has been kidnapped by Venom and has been carted off to the moon. Matt is the only one who can get him back. And no one is helping because it's a Bank Holiday or something.

Each one of the Mask games has been different from the last, and it's nice to see that a licence doesn't necessarily mean half a dozen games that all look alike in separate packaging. Of course Mask III may well look big and hunky now, but it still remains to be seen whether or not the bear likes it.

Streetdate: March.
Price: £7.99



FLINTSTONES

Strewth! These cartoon tie-ins are starting to work! What with The Edge's Garfield **only a couple of months ago and now Grand Slam's** Flintstones**, it looks like the software boys have discovered a medium from which they can poach ideas and convert them completely successfully.**

Flintstones **is programmed by the people behind** Terramex**; Sean Hollingworth and Peter Harrap, so you know that you're sure of spot-on animation and great gameplay. Take my word for it. I've played the demo.**

Assuming the character – fur costume and all – of Fred, you've got to live the life of a henpecked (Grand Slam's phraseology, not mine) prehistoric hubby, struggling with some seriously defective early technology.

Fred just wants a quiet life. Maybe watch a little TV, maybe a sleep. But the love of Fred's life is going bowling with his buddy Barney. Obviously Wilma is none to keen on Fred spending all his days down the bowling alley, and in the tradition of all middle-class American housewife stereotypes (prehistoric or otherwise) she insists that Fred should clean up the house a bit before he's allowed out to play.

So there you are, thoroughly miffed at the idea of missing a free lane at the bowl, having to paint the whole darned cave before Wilma gets back from collecting her mother who's going to stay for a few days.

You've got to move around the screen, dipping a furry animal in a pot of paint, then rush back to the wall and paint if for all you're worth. As well as the limited number of egg-timers which can run out before W. returns, there's the added difficulty of Pebbles, your daughter, who climbs out of her playpen and draws on the walls with her crayons.

The graphics are superb. Later levels (which haven't been written yet) include going to pick up Barney and having your wheels rattled off the car. You've got to try and find some more wheels and get to the bowling alley before it closes.

Flintstones **looks simply superb. More news next issue.**
Streetdate: May.
Price: £8.95





VIXEN

Cor blimey knock it on the head do what? pheoar look at the gor dear oh lor stewth on my life on her top flamin 'ell good grief melons page 3 know what I mean nudge nudge wahayy!

Oh dear. You'll have to excuse me. You don't know what sort of effect the sight of a digitised picture of Corinne Russell (cor cor phewer oarf nyah ooer wayhayy) has on me. And there's a game coming out with her in it!!!!! Brilliant!

Right. Presumably Martech will have stopped reading at this point, satisfied that what can only be viewed as a thoroughly tacky tie-in has assured it favourable coverage – owing to Ms Russell's undeniably acceptable figure.

Which means we can forget all about that nonsense and have a look at the game.

Vixen; half woman, half wolf, raised in the jungle and taught how to survive by her wits and not at all like Tarzan at all, honestly.



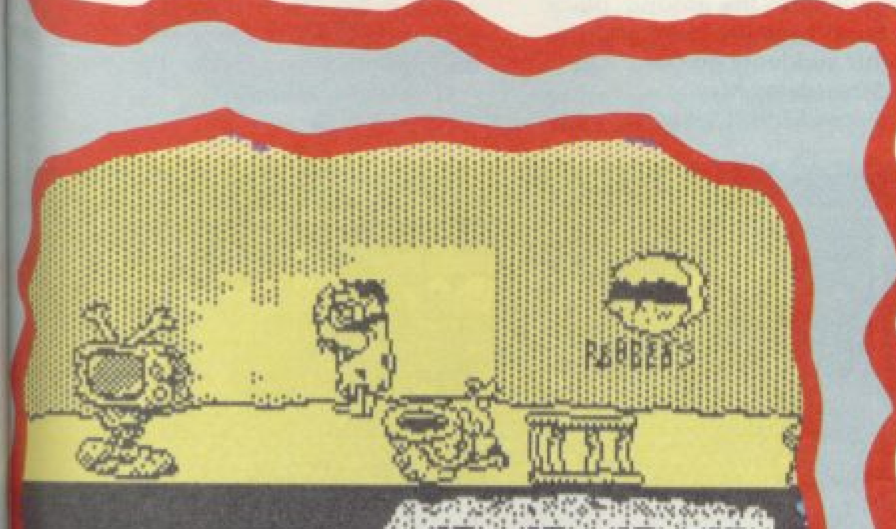


Vixen's homeland, the planet Granath, has been overrun with enormous pink dinosaurs, all singularly unfriendly and not at all concerned that their earthbound counterparts popped their clogs centuries ago. It's your job to despatch the giant pests from Granath by whipping them (phnar phnar – sorry).

There are both cave and above-ground levels, and the graphics look pretty good. They've been digitised, apparently, to give realistic running and whipping actions. You can also change into a fox at any time so you can gain access to tricky areas.

So. Aside from the awful pseudo-celeb tie-in, Vixen looks very promising.

Streetdate: April.
Price: £8.99





POWER PYRAMIDS

I really haven't a clue what to make of Power Pyramids **from Quicksilva. It may well turn out to be one of those ridiculously addictive things that don't look too wonderful until you've started playing with them, like Rubik's Cube. On the other hand, it might turn out to be indescribably annoying and overrated – like Rubik's Cube.**

OK, take a look at the picture. You see the yellow ball? Well, it's not a yellow ball at all. It's an automatic, robotic spheroid. See the *It's a Knockout* style obstacles? Well, they're 'dynamic features'. Are you beginning to see what I mean?

(Now take into account the fact that you only have two controls, speed change and jumps).

It's virtually impossible ("mind bending") to maintain any sort of control over the little blighter from what we've seen on the demo and despite the fact that there are 128



screens and someone has spent a good half of their lunchbreak thinking up a plot even more ridiculous than your average farcical effort, I remain thoroughly unconvinced.

But still, by the time we review it next issue, I'm sure we'll have changed our minds completely.

Streetdate: April.
Price: £8.95



PREVIEW 3







THE BARD'S TALE

Okay, so you've already been playing the demo on our tape for hours, but we thought that we'd tell you a bit about **The Bard's Tale.**

As you can tell from the pic, it's a bit Dungeons and Dragons in essence, what with halls and guilds and orcs and pixies and spells and lots of locations and characters and combat and dungeons and so on.

The game takes place in Skara Brae and its affiliated areas, and the place is so trouser-fillingly full of unpleasant monsters you won't be able to blink for fear of being snuck up upon from behind (ooer).

Streetdate: May
Price: £8.95

ACTION FORCE II

Dum dum de dum dum de dum dum de daah! Yes, just when you thought you'd seen the last of the little plastic men with funny hips, **Action Force II** from Virgin jumps in through the window.

In the sequel, you play Low Light, and your mission is to control the cross-hair sight of Low Light's rifle and bazooka, and must pick off the bad guys before they take out Quickick.

Now, as you're all eagle-eyed fact-finding smart alecs, you'll no doubt be concerned that all the sprites of the characters are light blue. Won't this make it pretty blummin impossible to see what's going on? No it won't thank you very much, because they're not going to stay light blue for very long, you see.

It's all part of Virgin's master plan. The Gang of Five (or Six – see Gremlin 72) has come up with this graphics technique which may well stop all those nasty problems to do with colours being too close together. Never before seen on a Spectrum, this. What happens is – Gak! (Windows shatter and CS gas fills the room. Five – or maybe six – masked figures swing in on ropes, butt-stroke the writer to the ground, place a hood over his head and the lights suddenly go out . . .)

Streetdate: May.
Price: £7.95

RINGWARS

For years and years, nay, eons and eons, the Ring Worlds have been grubbing around in a galaxy far from our own, munching their way through uninhabited planets.

They're now trotting towards our Solar System, hell bent on a spot of annexing and we're in trouble. Hitler just isn't in it!

In order to stop this Intergalactic banquet, it's up to you to get out your squadron and go and fight off the Ring Worlds.

Cascade, which seems to be acting as agent for the hungry planets, promise us that Ring Wars the game, will



be a 3-D sort of affair with wonderfully detailed vectors. Take a look at the screen shot and see what you think.

Streetdate: March.
Price: £9.95

ALIEN SYNDROME

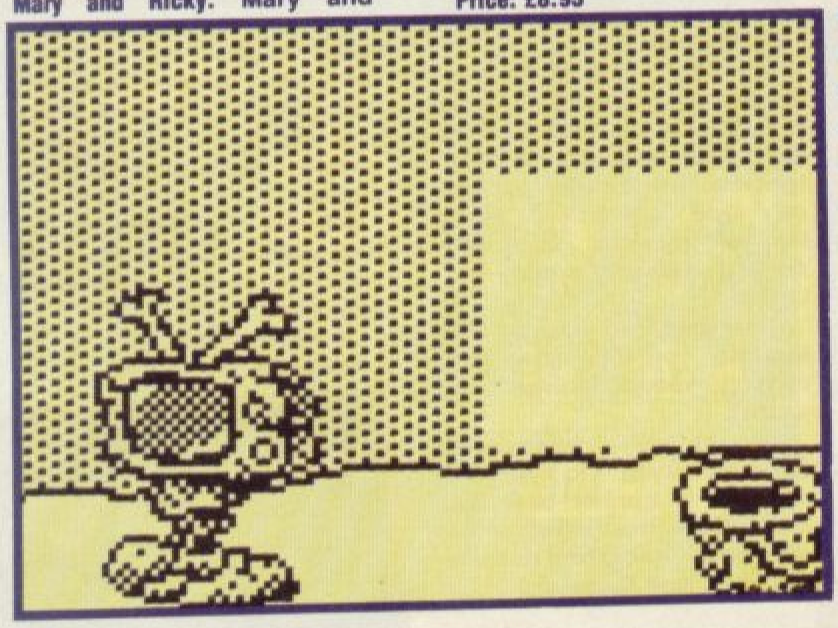
Can't these coin-op people ever strike a happy medium? Why are the names of the characters always so completely ridiculous?

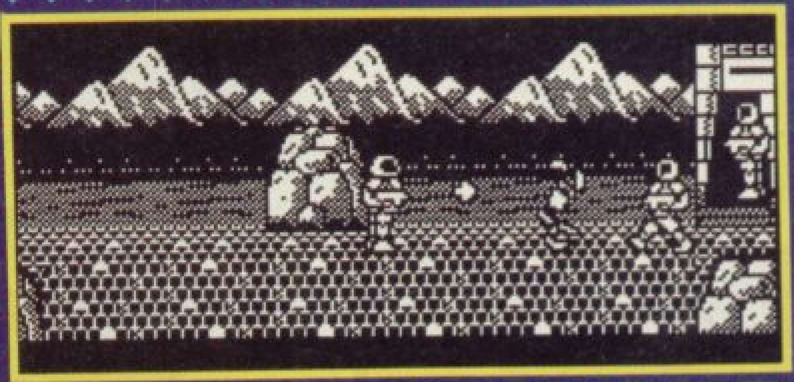
Take Alien Syndrome, **currently being converted for ACE. There you are, battling through thousands of alien fiends, trying to rescue your friends from a space station about to explode. And what names are the two characters you control inflicted with? Mary and Ricky. Mary and Ricky? How can you expect to grit your teeth and take on slobbery alien monsters when your credibility has been crippled by being christened Mary? Pah.**

Anyway, like the arcade game, you've got stacks of alien nasties to defeat and a huge scrolling maze to wander around.

No more info as yet, but it doesn't look too shoddy so far.

Streetdate: May.
Price: £8.95





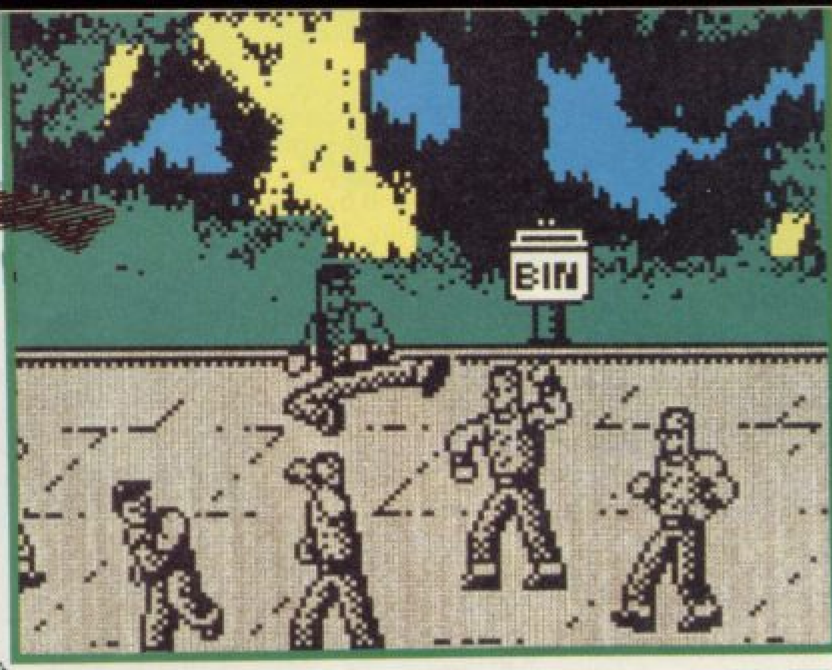
SOLDIER OF LIGHT

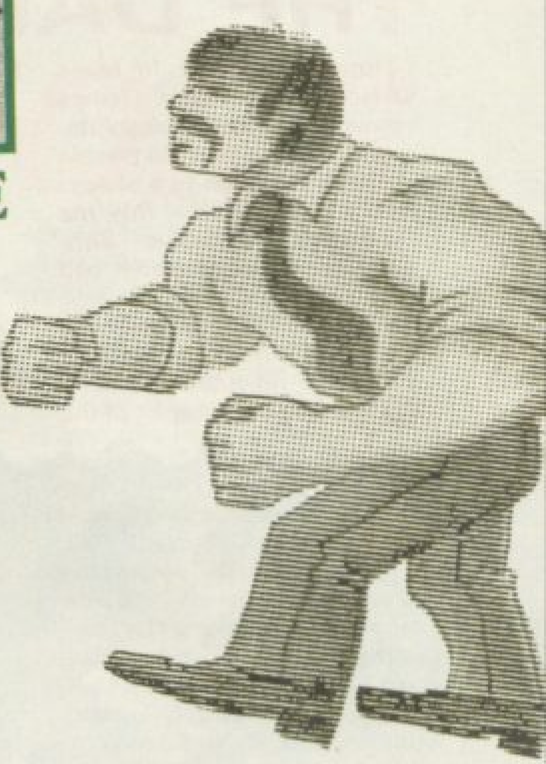
Xain. Your mission is threefold. Firstly, to wear one of those natty little orange spacesuits that hug your crevices and make you all hot and sweaty. Secondly, to blast the hell out of anything that is not the scenery, is not nice, and is not yourself. Thirdly, to, um, ah, thirdly, to ah, oh gosh, did I say there were three things? I must have gone mad, there are only two. Oh gosh.

In other words, buddy-boy, the brief is to play *Soldier of Light,* ***a new licence from those yummy people at Softek. Here we have the first screenshots, and boy don't they look scrumptious?***

For those of you who are pushing up your specs and scratching your heads and saying, "Er, that's not *Soldier of Light,* ***and if we're going to be correct, let's say it in the original Japanese,*** *Xain'd Sleena,* ***because there's no colour, and we all know that*** *Soldier of Light (Xain'd Sleena),* ***is absolutely chock full of colour, so let's get straight on the phone and ring up those silly SU people and tell them they've got it wrong again," yes, this is*** *Soldier of Light,* ***yes, it is monochrome, and it is also***







TARGET RENEGADE

'There'll be outraged vicars and concerned parents writing in over **Target Renegade.**

Anyone who remembers Ocean's first game will start to palpitate at the thought of another, even more violent sequel.

In this game, we're promised no fewer than seven different types of bad-guys, ranging from bikers spaced out on carbon monoxide, through seriously domineering women of the night to The Big Boss himself.

The action takes place in a wider variety of locations, too. There are car parks, streets, bars and shopping malls, all of which provide atmospheric backgrounds for what promises to be one of the most violent hand-to-hand combat games in ages.

The plot, while being largely superfluous, has you, as Matt's brother, hell-bent on avenging the horrible fate which befell him at the hands of Mr Big.

Just in case you missed **Renegade** the first time around, it's a kind of computerised cross between the *Boys Next Door, Rumble Fish* and *The Water Margin*; martial arts and streetfighting and gangs and bravado.

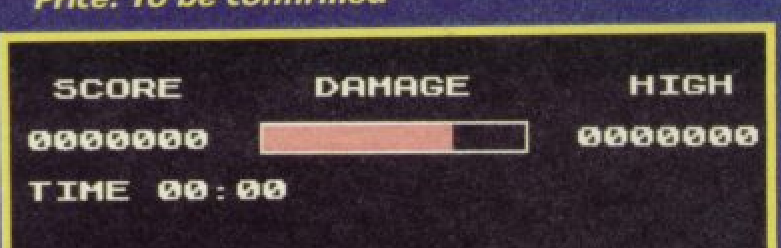
Streetdate: May.
Price: £7.95

absolutely fab.

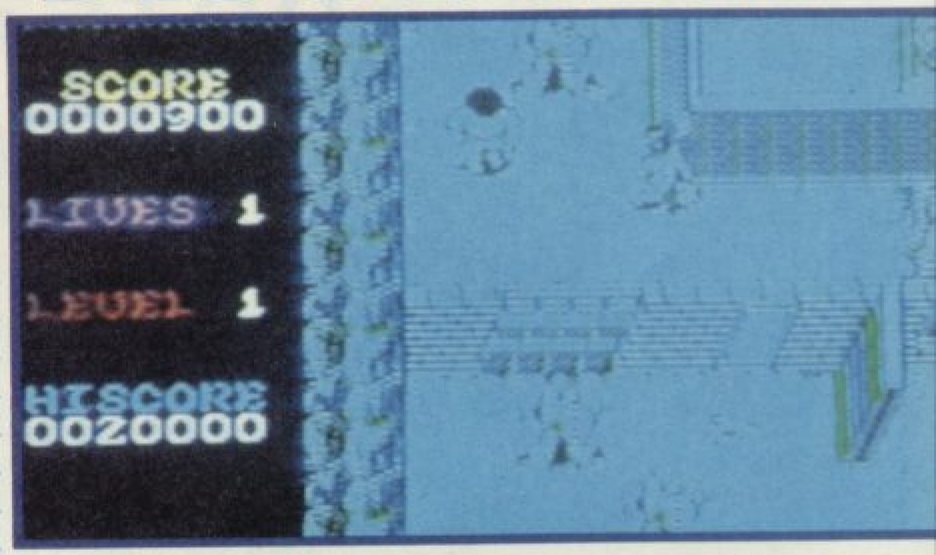
No, you couldn't really hope to recreate all those horrendous colour clashes on the Spectrum, could you (well, not on purpose anyway), and so Softek has gone, very sensibly I feel, for the ol' black 'n' white magic, and produced a game that looks, from the demo, to be pretty spunky stuff.

Yet another alien clearance program it may be, with several planets to chose from, (picka planet, any planet, I haven't met you before have I sir?) and several different aliens to knock 7 bells out of. But it's going to be absolutely fab, or you can call me a mongoose.

Streetdate: March.
Price: To be confirmed



DESOLATOR



US Gold has to be the most absurdly prolific software house in the whole universe all its products are clamouring for as many column inches as we can spare.

So it should be very thankful that we found space to mention **Desolator** a game which has got absolutely nothing in common at all with **Shackled,** also from USG, reviewed last issue. Even though they do look exactly the same.

In **Desolator,** you have to rescue lots and lots of tiny babies which have been trapped behind mirrors by a malevolent force.

There's a lot of punching in this game. You wander around the five levels, punching mirrors and bad guys and barrels which give you special powers.

Once you've released 9 babies, you turn into an incredible Macho-Man (Da-daaa!) and then you can go around punching things into oblivion instead of merely the middle of next week.

There are the standard-fare money bags, bonuses and teleports as well, although the big nasties at the end of each level have – we are told – to be seen to be believed.

Right. That's quite enough space devoted to that one.

Streetdate: May.
Price: £7.99

PREVIEW 5



THE DARK SIDE

Jimmy's campaign for More Normal Names In Games seems sadly to have absolutely no effect at all on the people in The Biz. Which is a shame (*Too bloody right! – Roy the Typesetter*), Incentive Software sets a particularly bad example.

The Dark Side, its follow up to **Driller,** includes no less than FIVE ridiculous titles in the first two paragraphs of the storyline. Kelars, Evath, Triscuspid, etc, etc.

It's quite a tribute to my immense dedication and patience that I'm previewing it at all (*Get on with it, you whining imbecile – G.T.*)

Anyway, what with spending so much time and effort on its Freescape 3-D system, Incentive simply had to bring out another game in the same vein as **Driller. The Dark Side** takes place just as the Ketars (the bad guys from **Driller**) are about to take revenge on mankind by blowing the Earth into tiny bits with a big jumbo whopper laser which they've sneakily hidden behind the moon.

You've got to get to the laser before they can put in the final 13 amp fuse and wipe out the whole of the human race.

You're free to move around on foot, assisted by a jet-propelled backpack which means you can put yourself in virtually any position and at any orientation on the planet.

The graphics make **Dark Side** look superior (though still similar to) **Driller,** and if Incentive have managed to speed up the gameplay, we could very well be looking at a Classic.

Streetdate: May.
Price: £8.95

BIONIC

Bionic Commandos will be one of the first games to emerge from the USG/Capcom deal (apart from **Side Arms,** of course). We haven't got any information at all, but we've got these pics. Thought you might be interested . . .

Streetdate: May.
Price: £8.99



IN THE WORKS

Wossalthisthen? "In the Works?" Wossat? Well, there's the Preview logo at the top, and these all look like pretty exciting games they're talking about, so I s'ppose this must be *another* incredible Preview page. Well look again, tomato brain. We've already told you about most of these games in Previews already, but owning to their extra fabness, they're taking a little longer than your average prog to complete. Not wanting you to miss out on any developments, we'll be giving you up to date info on games in progress as well as news on the neweys. Good idea? Yes. We thought you'd agree.

Nosin' around (nosin' around, nosin' around – for any *Young Ones* fans out there) in Players' highly secret bits, we came across some marvellously tasty new screen shots of Denizen, **and thought, "Gosh, what can we do with these?"**

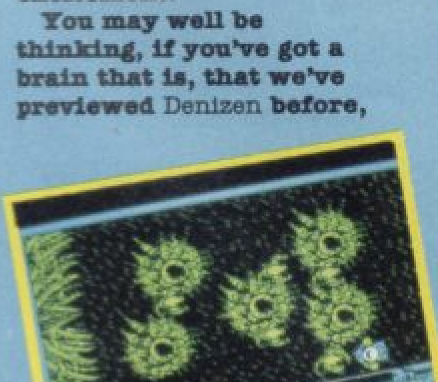
The answer was, naturally, to print them, so here they are, in full Technicolour glory, oozing 'oer'-ness and excitement.

You may well be thinking, if you've got a brain that is, that we've previewed Denizen **before, that you've seen this screen shot a-a-a-ages ago and it's bo-o-oring. Well shut up, because this is the start of SU's new Preview segment, the roving report, the eye in the sky, the by-the-way-guess-what's-happening-with, the Fairly Serious Update Section.**

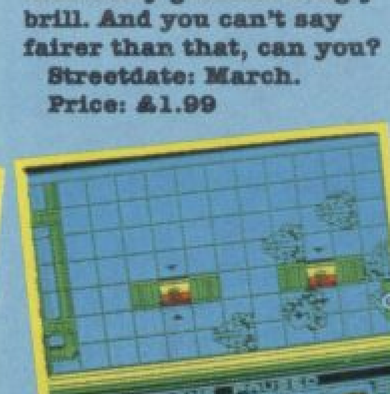
Players has already gone to town with Denizen, **tarting up the graphics of heroes and nasties alike, adding new levels and earth shattering bits. And all for what, may I ask? All for you. Players is doing all this for you.**

Denizen **(I thought we were going to change that title?) will be out, hopefully, next month, at the princely sum of £1.99, and if Players' current software track record is anything to go by at all,** Denizen **is going to be absolutely gobsmackingly brill. And you can't say fairer than that, can you?**

Streetdate: March.
Price: £1.99







Software Projects, currently none too unchuffed with itself following the almost rapturous reception received by **Star Paws,** is working on a wonderful project, which at the moment is called **Anaconda.** It's a multi-stage spacey shoot out which plays at about every orientation you could imagine.

You can fly a space ship vertically up the screen, shooting and bombing, you can fly a space ship sideways across the screen, and you can go sideways and diagonally and every other way in a plan-view section, wacking out bad guys a la **Commando.** And all this in a single load folks.

The boys from the 'Pool say we're looking at a July release.

Hands up everyone who remembers **September**? Yes. That's the one, bit windy and wet, nothing very special. Well, it's much the same story with Activision's game of the same name. Apparently it' been shelved, and it'll probably be next **September** before we see the blasted thing.

Where Time Stood Still seems to have almost become a victim of its own titl. Ever since we previewed it wa[s] back last summer, it seems to have been caught in a mysterious vortex with no visible progress. Well, the good news is that we're now looking for a release date around June, so far as we can tell. In case you'd forgotten, it's a 3-D graphical scroller in the same vein as **The Great Escape,** and it looked darned near complete when we saw it ages ago.

STOP PRESS
REVIEW
STOP PRESS



ARCADE
REVIEW

IKARI WARRIORS

As you may recall, everybody expected **Ikari Warriors** a while back – well a year ago, to be exact. It's quite a long time to wait. Is **IW** worth it? The first thing is the game comes in one of these new giant cardboard boxes filled mostly with air – I think the size of packaging is becoming an kind of software house one-upmanship, but (chortle chortle) it isn't the size that counts.

Enough of that. **Ikari Warriors** was a coin-op beloved by many in the oldenish days and it's in the **Commando** mode of lone-soldier-running-along-firing-all-the-time-blowing-things-to-bits-top-to-bottom-scroll. The only significant feature really is the fact that you can toggle between two players and from time to time grab a tank to do some serious damage.

Do you need a plot? Well, this general has been held captive by a band of revolutionaries and desperately needs rescuing. Instead of sending in serious numbers of nuclear forces to blow them away, the forces of truth, justice and the American way have decided to send just you instead, and a friend if you're doing the two player option. Maybe they don't really want this guy back . . .

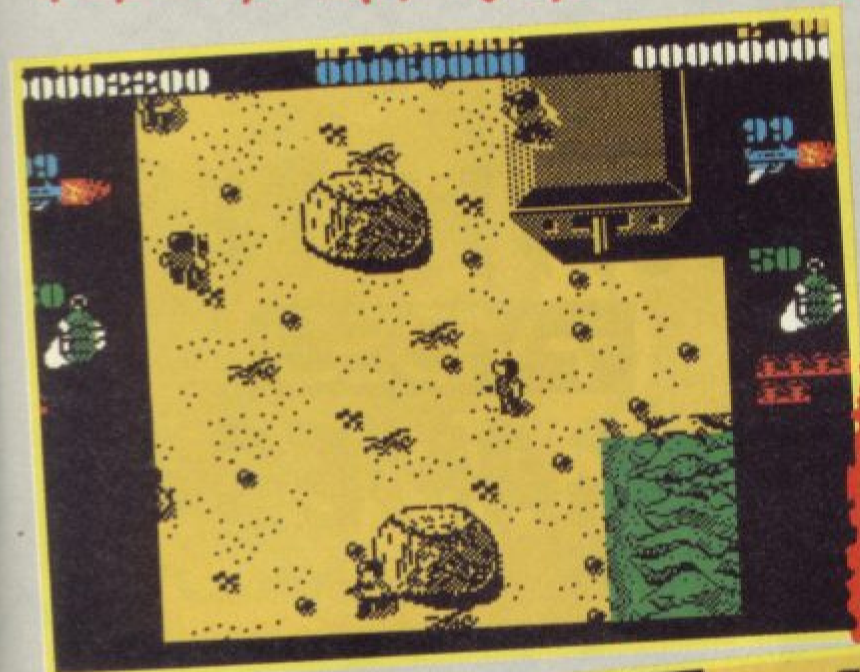
From moment one, streaming hordes of revolutionaries leap on you, filling the screen with the large and small black blobs that stand for grenades and bullets in this game. You blast and dodge your way past them, occasionally taking out big gun emplacements, which crumble away to reveal bonus bullets, grenades, lives and fuel. This last is for the odd tanks which seem to have been left thoughtfully scattered around the screen.

Main characters are small, though they zoom around pretty speedily, but some of the gun turrets, boulders and other bits and pieces that litter the playing area are quite detailed and effective. Though several basic designs seem to crop up over and over again . . .

For all that **Ikari Warriors** is fast and more addictive than you might expect. I had a severe case of the 'just-on-mores', despite feeling pretty unimpressed with the overall look of the game.

A quick word on the sound. Whilst on the 48K it's merely average, on the 128K it's excellent, in fact it may be the closest to a real 'coin-op' sounding soundtrack I've ever heard and adds significantly to the game.

Ikari Warriors is very late, looks fairly out of date and won't be anybody's all-time favourite game, but the gameplay is strong and the action is fast, and that counts for quite a lot in my book. Worth the wait? Just about■



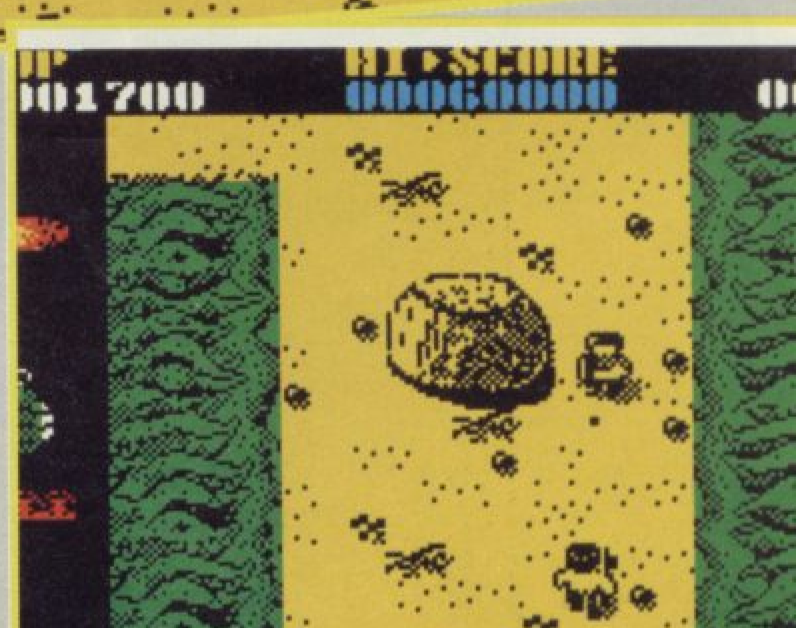
FAXBOX

Somewhat old-fashioned Commando clone, good fun nontheless

IKARI WARRIORS
Label: Elite
Author: David Snea
Price: £8.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various
Reviewer: Graham Taylor

★★★★☆
★★★☆☆ 7





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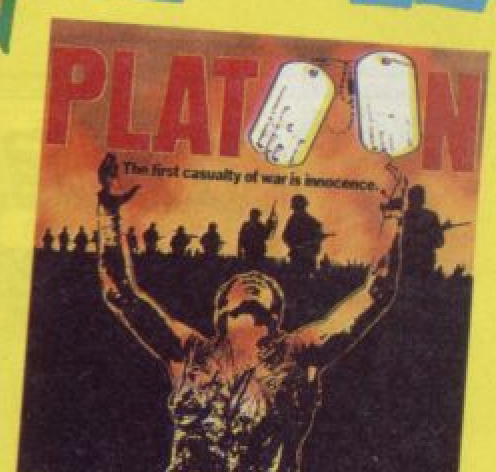
GRYZOR



MATCH DAY II



FIREFLY



PLATOON

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Gremlin's Guide to Bad Beginnings in Phone Calls If You Are a Computer Journalist

Phone person says	Phone person means
"I don't suppose you can help me, but . . ."	You don't sound very knowledgeable
"I'm not very well up on the technical side . . ."	Actually, I'm not sure we've wired up the plug properly
"I took it back to the shop, but they weren't very helpful . . ."	I hadn't kept the receipt, and the dog had chewed up the inlay cord
"I bought Johnny a Spectrum for educational purposes . . ."	I've been had
"I bought a copy of your 'Spectrum Weekly' . . ."	I bought a copy of Sinclair User, but I didn't look at it very closely
"How do I get out of the Goblin's Dungeon . . .?"	I'm the only person in my class who doesn't know and no-one will tell me
"I'm new to computers . . ."	Is the Spectrum not ideal for business, then?
"Can you give me just a few tips for Megablaster of the Thirteenth Dimension . . .?"	I can't get off the first screen
"Why don't you cover educational programs and spreadsheets any more . . .?"	I am completely beyond help and nobody will speak to me
"I've noticed a mistake in your magazine . . ."	Send me a free game, I am a smart ass and will blab to the *Star*

GREMLIN'S GUIDE TO HOW TO AVOID EDUCATIONAL SOFTWARE

1 Things to say if your parents ask you about educational software:
"There isn't any"
"The Spectrum can't run them"
"Well, Mirrorsoft used to do some, but it got better"
"Arcade games are very educational, in fact"

2 How to spot an educational program by its title, eg:
a) Mr Wombat Adds Things Up
b) Spelling from Outer Space
c) Manic Maths
d) Screaming Diz Busters from Hell
NB item (d) is either a brilliant arcade game or a heavy metal LP; all the rest are dodgy in the extreme

3 What to do with any educational programs you might find:
a) Erase them
b) That's about it really

4 When is it a good idea to mention educational software?
When you are first trying to get your parents to cough up for a new Spectrum, eg, *"I'm sure if we got a +3 there would be a lot more educational software for it."*

IMPORTANT TIP
Don't let parents loose in Microfairs, as educational software sometimes lurks in bargain bins.



Gremlin

Last Month's competition



Hmmmm. Not too bad really. Gremlin had faith that SU readers would be able to come up with something moderately entertaining based on well-known political figures. Moderately is the word, but still . . .

Of the myriad entries, "Ying Tong, Ying Tong, Ying Tong, Ting" from 'The Mercenary' was fairly bizarre, as was "This guy hogs the camera even more than Jonathon Woss" from Paul Smith. The winner for all-round right on-ness was "Does your Star Wars *program have a unilateral disarmament facility?" Whoa! bitta politics, bitta politics there, from Phil Bennett of Bracknall, Berks, who gets this month's big bucks.*



Caption Competition number 17

Just look at this thing Gremlin has dug up from the very depths of the back of Gareth's filing cabinet. Gremlin finds the picture completely bizarre and full of captioning opportunities. Why the bear? Who are these people? Why does that woman have that funny expression? WHAT AN EARTH IS GOING ON? You decide. Closing date 31st March.

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FAR AWAY IN A LAND
WHERE TIME STOOD STILL ...
... A SUDDEN ROCK-FALL THREATENS TO KILL OUR HERO
ARGHH!!
WHERE TIME STOOD STILL
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RRRRRRRR!
GOOD LORD!
DANGER LOOMS EVERYWHERE!!
OH NO!! CANNIBALS
ocean



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...From the lift you enter the first room...
...But where to next?...
...Who or what is lurking behind these cars?...
...Can you access the next tower?...
...Could the final P.I.N. number be here?...
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...Why is the robot guarding that table?...
...A message on the tape recorder?...
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